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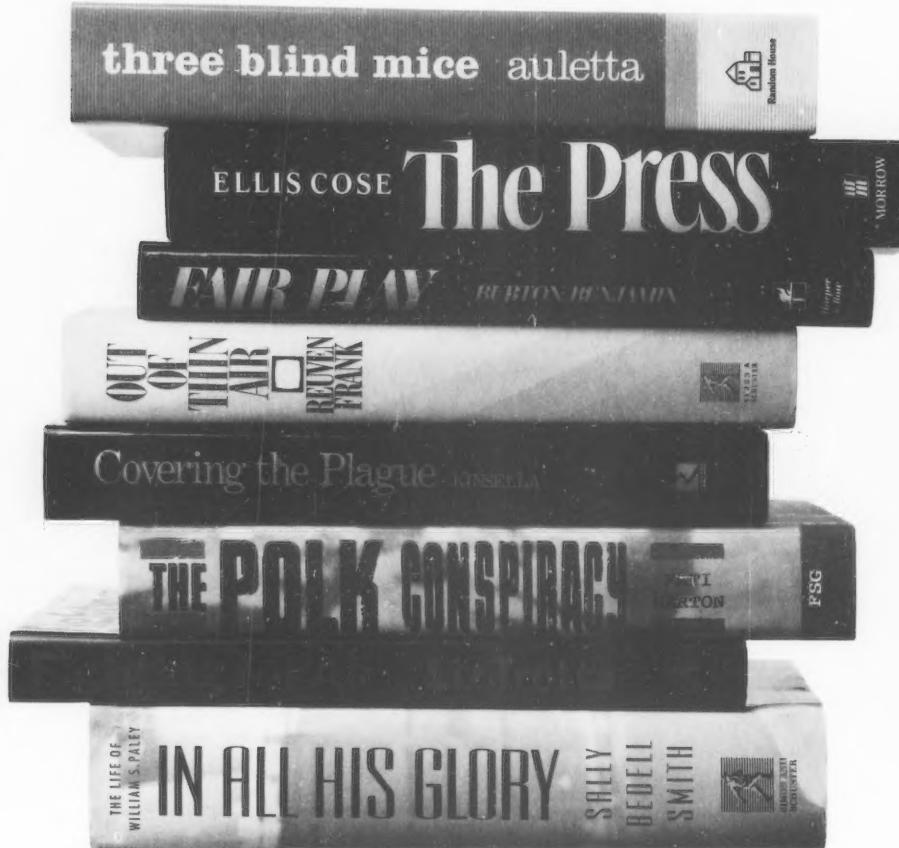
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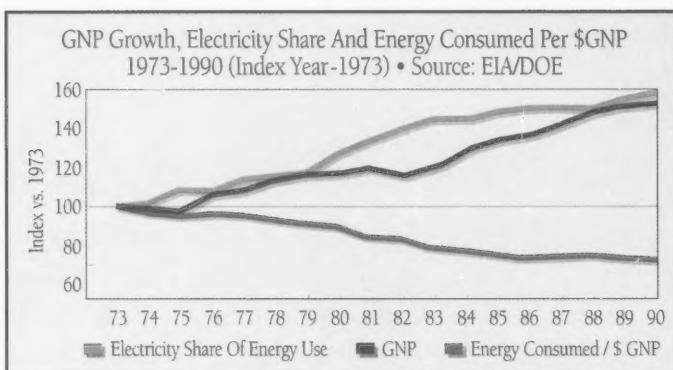
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From the founding editorial,  
1961



page 42

SYGMA

Cover photos:  
AP/WIDE WORLD



The First Lady warns the press, page 52

CAMPAGN '92  
REPORT CARD ON THE PRESS

## Covering A Runaway Campaign

*Week by week, the campaign — and the coverage — that was*  
BY D.D. GUTTENPLAN

23

### HIGHS AND LOWS

#### DISCOURSE: A moment of truth — on Donahue

BY JAY ROSEN

34

#### JENNIFER: That other A-word story

BY JON SWAN

36

#### TRADE: Economic labels that lie

BY JOHN JUDIS

38

#### WOMEN: The year of

BY JANE O'REILLY

40

#### DRAFT: Sniping at Clinton's nonwar record

BY WILLIAM BROYLES, JR.

42

#### WHY: Exit polls are not enough

BY JAMES BOYLAN

56

## Talk Radio

*Politicians pay attention to it because people do*  
BY MIKE HOYT

44

## Media Bashing

*Could Barbara Bush be right?*

BY CHRISTOPHER HANSON

52



page 44

## ◆ Chronicle 13

*No free lunch: I.F. Stone and the KGB*

*Bombay Dost: India's only gay publication*

*Why TV salaries are heading south*

*The Jesus People investigative team*

*South Africa: why reporters are vulnerable now*

*How the FBI impersonated a journalist*

## ◆ BOOKS

*Sound and Fury: The Washington Punditocracy and the Collapse of American Politics*  
by Eric Alterman

*Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes*  
by Helen Benedict  
reviewed by Susan Rieger

57



page 34

AP/WIDE WORLD

## ◆ LETTERS

4

## ◆ DARTS AND LAURELS

21

## ◆ SHORT TAKES

62

## ◆ THE LOWER CASE

65

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# LETTERS

## GETTING IT RIGHT

Alicia Mundy's article ("Is the Press Any Match For Powerhouse P.R.?" CJR, September/October) properly reminds editors and reporters to be wary of the games that public relations "spin-meisters" can play. In citing a 1985 *Detroit News* series on asbestos as a purported example of how material can be "planted" in the press, however, she is badly off target.

The articles were not an op-ed page series, as your author implies. They were a front-page series that carefully examined the conventional wisdom about the risk to human health of asbestos as commonly used in buildings. The series was proposed to the *News* by free-lancer Michael Bennett. His reporting, based on a wide variety of academic, government, and industry sources, was carefully monitored and reviewed by *News* editors.

Ms. Mundy quotes a U.S. Gypsum Co. memo taking credit for having "very actively fed much of this information" to the *News*. But this proves nothing. Any ambitious p.r. man seeing an article favorable to his cause might make a similar claim.

The real question is whether the information in the series was accurate and fairly presented. We remain confident that it was. Indeed, recent Environmental Protection Agency actions down-grading the risks to public health from asbestos installations in schools and other public buildings fully vindicate the Bennett series. We wish Ms. Mundy's article had been as carefully reported as Mr. Bennett's series.

**ROBERT H. GILES**

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER  
*THE DETROIT NEWS*  
DETROIT, MICH.

The editors reply: *We regret the error — misidentifying Michael Bennett's front-page series as an op-ed piece. We agree that the U.S. Gypsum memo reproduced in The Daily Record, the Maryland business and legal paper, is not conclusive of the facts it purports to state. We regret any negative implication the publication of the memo suggests as to Mr. Bennett's credibility as a journalist.*

## JUDGMENT IN SARAJEVO

Kudos to ITN's Mike Nicholson for saving Natasha, the nine-year-old orphan, from the carnage of Sarajevo ("Natasha's Story," CJR, September/October), and a big Bronx cheer to the journalists who said this act of compassion and human decency somehow impugns his credibility to cover the civil war in Yugoslavia. What's wrong with these people? Do they have icewater in their veins? Just because you're a journalist doesn't mean you stop being a human being.

In 1972, after an eighteen-month stint in Vietnam as a war correspondent, my wife, who accompanied me on the assignment, and I felt helpless to assuage the human misery we witnessed. We adopted a young Vietnamese girl and took her to the U.S.

Today our Marlene is married, living in Houston with her husband. They are the loving parents of two beautiful boys, whom they are raising in a comfortable home. I can't imagine what her life would have been like if she had had to endure the war years after we left and the cruel regime that followed the so-called liberation of the country.

I consider this act one of the highlights of my personal and professional life, and, no, it did not decrease my credibility as a journalist. I wish Mike Nicholson and Natasha the best.

**ARTHUR A. LORD**

NBC NEWS  
BURBANK, CALIF.

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"Karen? It's Bill. I turned up another unsolved murder. Never made the papers."

"Does it fit the pattern?"



"Same as Columbus, Akron and Baltimore."

"Sounds like a serial killer." "And no one else is onto it."



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In "Natasha's Story," Anna Shen claims that London-based ITN reporter Michael Nicholson "broke the rule" of non-involvement and ignited fervent debate in "newsrooms across Europe" when he smuggled a nine-year-old girl out of Sarajevo.

But, in supporting her claim that "journalists were appalled," Shen could find only two anti-Nicholson quotes in Europe. One was from a "news desk assistant" in the London office of ABC News (that's the pimply kid we used to call "copy boy"), the other from an "operations producer" in the same office (that's the person who books the satellite feeds to New York, replenishes the tape stock, tells the desk assistant what flights to book to Berlin, and approves overtime for the camera crews).

In dealing with this issue which is purported to have inflamed Europe, only Americans are deemed fit to contemplate ethical standards in a *European* situation. It is these same perceptions which lead viewers of ABC News to believe that only American aid planes land in Sarajevo and that everyone in Bosnia-Herzegovina speaks terrific English.

**RON HAGGART**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER  
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TORONTO

Anna Shen replies: *While I cited only two journalists, I interviewed more than a dozen print and broadcast journalists — half of them British, half American.*

*Mr. Haggart belittles Paul Cleveland, an American, whom I described as "operations producer," which is his exact title. Cleveland is also the London producer for World News This Morning and Good Morning America. He has covered the Iranian revolution, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the abortive coup to overthrow Gorbachev. Ian Bremner is not American, as Mr. Haggart seems to assume, but British.*

*Journalists at other London-based networks were appalled at Nicholson's actions, but could not comment for attribution because of company policy.*

### JOE KLEIN REPLIES

I was rather surprised CJR would print Howell Raines's casually defamatory remarks about me ("A Walk Through the Garden," CJR, September/October) without (a) checking their accuracy or (b) giving me a chance to respond directly.

For the record, I never criticized "other reporters who refuse to cheerlead" for Bill Clinton. Indeed, my own reporting of Clinton's candidacy often was quite critical, and remains so. Further, Raines insults his

own staff when he says he made it a "main job to warn against and protect his younger campaign reporters" from my views. Which ones? Even if my alleged views were so insidious, I'm sure that fine journalists like Gwen Ifill, Maureen Dowd, Elizabeth Kolbert, and Robin Toner — the *Times* reporters most frequently assigned to Clinton — were able to come to their own conclusions.

I do plead guilty to making the judgment, early on, that Clinton was the most talented of the Democrats running this year — making such judgments comes with the territory for a political columnist. At the same time, I noted Clinton's disturbing tendency to "describe issues rather than take stands on them" and his attempts to "finesse all the people all of the time" (*New York*, January 20, 1992).

I have no idea why Mr. Raines has decided to wage this year-long campaign against me. I've only met the fellow once; he seemed harmless. But I do find his behaviour odious and unprofessional, and I'm quite disappointed that CJR would provide an uncritical forum for his fantasies.

**JOE KLEIN**

NEWSWEEK  
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## THE TELL-TALE HART

Two of my favorite journalistic institutions — CJR and John Hart — apparently believe that normal reporting standards do not apply to stories about *The Christian Science Monitor's* adventures in television ("The News for God's Sake," CJR, September/October).

Among the lapses:

■ CJR failed to check the allegations Hart presents. Why was no effort made to obtain a response to Hart's damaging — and false — allegation of church censorship?

Impartial observers were readily available. *The Boston Globe* called former *World Monitor* executive producer Sanford Socolow for comment on Hart's article. Socolow told the *Globe* (August 27, 1992), "we did have editorial independence for the eighteen months I was there." Socolow's successor as executive producer, Bill Chesleigh, also categorically denies Hart's claims of improper church influence.

■ CJR let Hart place his recollection of events in quotes even though Hart admits his notes sometimes were taken hours after the fact. Did it occur to the editors that the result might omit — as it did — information calling into question Hart's version of events?

■ Hart failed to tell his co-workers that he

was systematically taking notes on private conversations. Reputable news organizations require staffers to clearly identify themselves as reporters when on assignment. What are the ethics of putting colleagues "on the record" without their knowledge?

The *Monitor* is owned by a church. But our newspaper's eighty-year history and *Monitor Radio's* wide acceptance clearly show that the goal of our news activities is public service through first-class journalism. It is not public relations or membership building. The talented journalists who worked at *World Monitor* — both those who were Christian Scientists and those who were not — should be judged by the stories they produced. Their work was first-rate.

DAVID COOK

EDITOR

MONITOR BROADCASTING  
BOSTON, MASS.

I found John Hart's article on his experience at *World Monitor* dishonest, to say the least.

Dishonest because for almost three years he gathered much of its content from conversations *without informing the participants he was making notes for publication*.

Dishonest because, once he had prepared the article, those participants were given neither the courtesy of notice nor an oppor-

tunity to respond.

Dishonest because the article was totally without context. What evolved at *World Monitor* was an independent news organization that covered stories the networks didn't, from Burma to Bangladesh, and won awards for its coverage of everything from the Soviet Union to AIDS.

Mr. Hart's article was especially dishonest because it implied that many of us non-Christian Scientist producers and staffers were part of what he perceives as a conspiracy of church doctrine over editorial content. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Not only has Mr. Hart betrayed the principles of fairness, accuracy, and contextual balance that he so profoundly espouses, he has betrayed those of us with whom he worked.

TOM CHEATHAM

SENIOR PRODUCER

WORLD MONITOR  
BOSTON, MASS.

I was executive producer of *World Monitor* from January 1, 1990, to April 15, 1992. There was no interference in the editorial process either from inside the organization or from outside the organization. We were able to do independent journalism. I have always fervently believed in the editorial principle of neither fear nor favor and that is

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what I practiced at *World Monitor* and what I made sure that the show followed.

My final interview for the *World Monitor* job was with Jack Hoagland, Jr., who at the time was manager of the Christian Science Publishing Society and editor-in-chief of Monitor Television. I asked Jack if there were subjects we could not deal with and his answer was no. Jack gave me one instruction: to make sure that the show lived up to the highest editorial standards.

When the guidelines which John Hart helped formulate and which he talks about in his article were put out they were certainly welcomed by all of us. I must tell you that while we were proud of and grateful for them, we didn't work any differently the day after they were put out than the day before. The principles embodied in the guidelines were ones we were already working under. They were principles many of us had worked under before, and ones which we had many discussions about. They were welcome because they did codify for all those working on *World Monitor*, as well as for all those who worked for Monitor Television, a set of principles and a way to work that we knew would be helpful to all. And as issues came up under the guidelines, we dealt with them.

There are two things that really disap-

point me about John in reading his article. First, how he could be passionately interested in a discussion and believe at the same time he could be dispassionate in reporting on it. He knows and I know that you can't get good journalism from that combination. Second, how selectively he chose which conversations and which parts of conversations to report. In all cases he chose only those portions that would help his case and forgot other conversations or portions thereof that might be inconvenient. In my case, he was both inaccurate and incomplete.

**WILLIAM CHESLEIGH**  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER  
WORLD MONITOR  
BOSTON, MASS.

John Hart replies: *I've searched these letters for the quote, the fact, the incident, the account that was wrong, and can't find any. The article was about the church's presence in Monitor journalism. Monitor Television was to hold to the standards of the newspaper. I refer my colleagues to the recent forthright statement by an editor of The Christian Science Monitor, David Mutch, who wrote in the September 13 Boston Globe that the Monitor "does not present descriptions of disease in its pages," that while the paper recognizes "the full range of*

*evils in the world, and the need to grapple with and overcome them, the Monitor nevertheless tones its copy so as not to magnify the power that evils claim, in usurpation of the power of God." It was resistance to religious toning, and the negotiations to separate World Monitor from it, that I wrote about.*

*If Jack Hoagland gave Bill Chesleigh license to cover any story, David Cook had a license to "tone" it later, which he often and openly attempted to use. If Bill felt no interference it may have been because he didn't write the broadcast. I wrote it and David brought to me his theological changes, his objections to "tone." Which he does not deny.*

*David denies that there was censorship in Monitor Television but does not deny that a completed report on prenatal care was removed from the Inner City Beat program on the Monitor Channel because two Christian Scientists were about to go on trial for the death of their young son, who died without medical treatment. He does not deny saying publicly later that he hovered too much over World Monitor's report of that trial. Bill does not deny suggesting a guilty verdict should mean a short report and a not-guilty verdict a long report.*

*David does not deny that books were rejected for reading on The Children's*

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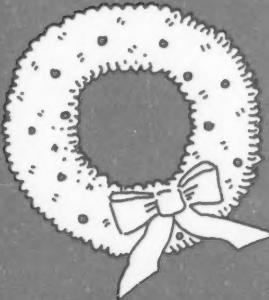
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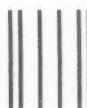
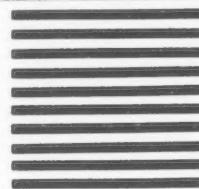
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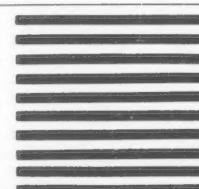
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Room program on the Monitor Channel for references to doctors and aspirin. And Bill does not deny that he advised David to remove the documentation of this from the general access computer where it had been discovered by a producer who wasn't a member of the church.

*I make no attack on Bill or Tom. They had every right to take the positions they took. I and others became uneasy. They did not. And they are in good company. As Mr. Mutch wrote, "significant journalists who were not members of the church had accepted Monitor editorial guidelines and lived by them."*

*The complaint of these letters seems to be that the manner in which World Monitor went about serving the public was revealed to the public. Our discussions were in public places, in the newsroom and editorial offices of a program offered as a public service. And the discussions and decisions were about public business, about what the public was to see and hear. I believe journalism is a public trust. Accounts of decision-making by elected public servants are published all the time. Are journalists to be privileged? Protected from accountability? I don't think so.*

*Tom is right: I didn't say I was taking notes for publication. I wasn't. I'm a journalist who keeps a journal. This was no*

*secret. In fact, a senior producer would drop by at least once a week with "another tidbit for your notebook." I didn't write the article for CJR until I saw a headline in The Boston Globe in May asserting that CHRISTIAN SCIENCE WAS SET ASIDE AT MONITOR RADIO, TV.*

## THE PARENT-DUMPING TREND

In "Apparent Dumping" (CJR, September/October), Leslie Bennetts says that my March 26 Times story on John Kingery, an eighty-two-year-old Alzheimer's patient who was abandoned at an Idaho dog track, was "misleading in almost every respect." She is wrong, and her assertion certainly applies to her own piece.

■ Bennetts writes that "it turns out" that Kingery's daughter hadn't been taking care of him, and was suspected of criminal intent, as if Bennetts had been the first to discover it. Sorry. We reported that prominently in our page-one story.

■ In attacking our story, she completely avoids the first quote from our piece, from a spokesman for the American Association of Retired People. They had pronounced it a trend, and in fact had issued a bulletin on it several months before the Kingery incident. Their spokesman said parents are dumped in hospitals every day.

■ She takes issue with the statistic we used, based on a survey by the American College of Emergency Room Physicians. In the survey, 189 physicians said they saw an average of eight abandonments per week. Yes, I multiplied that out to get a yearly average. If it is reported that one person a week is murdered in a given city, is it wrong to say that, on average, fifty-two people a year are killed in that city? Also, I was careful not to label this as a scientific finding, saying at the start of the sentence that "precise numbers are not available."

■ Finally, she takes issue with one quote I used from an expert, saying Dr. Penelope Hommel "disagreed with his thesis." I did not ask Dr. Hommel how widespread parent-dumping might be. Nobody — including Dr. Hommel — knows for sure, as noted earlier. I asked her to explain the problems of taking care of elderly parents, which she did.

The problem with this kind of story comes when everyone else tries to make an instant trend out of it, dropping the caveats and playing to the stereotypes. The fact is this country will soon have an unprecedented number of people in their eighties, many of them suffering from Alzheimer's disease. How we treat them is an important story. John Kingery, abandoned at a dog track one

# The American Chiropractic Association



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March afternoon, was but one example. We tried to give some context to that example.

**TIMOTHY EGAN**  
SEATTLE CORRESPONDENT  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Leslie Bennetts replies: 1) Although Timothy Egan did write that Kingery's daughter, Sue Gifford, was under investigation, he did not report that she had never been responsible for her father's physical or financial care; he portrayed Kingery's abandonment as an example of "granny-dumping," and the context he provided was all about the burden on middle-aged children of caring for their elderly parents. Nor did he report that Gifford had been appropriating her father's benefit checks — despite an AP story to that effect on the very same day — or follow up with any subsequent story to correct the misleading impression he had created, even when Gifford was indicted on theft, perjury, and kidnapping charges. The implication of his coverage was that Gifford was guilty only of abandoning her father.

2) The American Association of Retired Persons spokesman Egan quoted later told me he felt that Egan had taken his comments "out of context," that Egan's statistics were "unsubstantiated," and that he had "way blown out of proportion" his thesis of an

epidemic of parent-dumping. I also interviewed a second AARP representative who disagreed with Egan's premise entirely.

3) Egan seems to think that having told his readers that "no precise numbers are available" excuses the fact that he then provided some through his own statistical manipulations. He extrapolated these specious figures from an informal survey by the American College of Emergency Physicians, which had clearly labeled its findings a "random sample" that did not constitute "scientifically valid data." The fact that Egan sees nothing wrong with this speaks for itself. His own paper disagrees. On September 15, almost six months after the article appeared, The New York Times printed a correction, saying that Egan's piece had "referred imprecisely" to the results of the survey, that the figure of "70,000 elderly parents ... abandoned last year" which Egan had attributed to the survey was actually calculated "by the Times," and that one of the components from the survey Egan multiplied to reach that 70,000 figure included "an unknown number of elderly people who were not abandoned at hospitals, but who simply had no one to care for them after treatment."

## GOOD WORK OBSERVED

Phil Primack may be right about the dearth of labor reporting in the U.S. press ("We All Work, Don't We?" CJR, September/October). And he is right that *The Boston Globe*, *The Washington Post*, and *The New York Times* did mostly quick-hit gut-wrenchers after the tragic fire in Hamlet, North Carolina, that killed twenty-five and injured fifty-six last year.

But then he wrote that, overall, "enterprise reporting was sparse on, say, the failings of the Reagan-Bush Occupational Safety and Health Administration or those of state regulators."

Ahem.

To excerpt *Observer* editor Rich Oppel's January 31 nominating letter to the Pulitzer jury, the following were among our many exclusive reports:

■ On September 4, the day after the fire, we reported worker complaints that exits were locked — and revealed that the state had not once inspected the plant in the eleven years it was open.

■ On September 5, we reported that the state's worker-safety program ranked last in the United States for number of inspectors. After *Observer* stories, Governor Jim Martin sought money for more inspectors.

■ We disclosed that Imperial Food didn't



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shut down the fryer during hydraulic line repairs in order not to lose production time.

■ We reported that Imperial was in financial trouble and had a record of safety problems in other states.

■ The *Observer* triggered a federal inquiry after publicizing that a U.S. food safety inspector visited Hamlet every working day but never took note of locked exits. Following a congressional hearing, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it will train inspectors in safety and require them to check for violations.

■ Through documents gained from FOI requests, we showed that the U.S. food inspector approved locking a key exit where many people died.

**JOSEPH MENN**

STAFF WRITER

THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER  
CHARLOTTE, N.C.

## TOO CLEVER BY HALF

In praising *Sam Trade* for its report on Japan's influence on U.S. media (Darts and Laurels, CJR, May/June), you used two loaded words — "scrutable" and "slant." Those words conjure up derogatory stereotypes of Asians and Asian Americans as "inscrutable Orientals" and "slant-eyes."

Although the intent was probably to be clever, the result demonstrated insensitivity to the way those and other loaded words have been used by hate groups and by the media to stir up animosity and to portray Asians and Asian Americans unfairly.

**DAVID LOUIS**

NATIONAL PRESIDENT  
THE ASIAN AMERICAN  
JOURNALISTS ASSN.  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

## AN ANTI-TIMES TILT?

While your criticism of *The New York Times* in "Apparent Dumping" (CJR, September/October 1992) was appropriate, your editorial treatment of the *Times* generally strikes me as open to question. Over the years I have noted numerous appearances of the *Times* in the Darts and Laurels column (almost always as a Dart), as well as frequent digs at the newspaper.

This symphony of criticism is seldom accompanied by deserved notes of praise; and even when such are found, they are generally of the "damning-with-faint-praise" variety. A good example is to be found in a sidebar to "How They Watch Washington," also in the September/October issue, where twelve Washington newspaper bureaus are compared. Under the *Times*'s Editorial Agenda heading, it is stated that the paper's "legislative affairs reporting is less distin-

guished but retains traditional prominence in foreign policy coverage; also signs of less pontifical and more sprightly writing." The Editorial Agendas of the eleven other Washington bureaus are straight unadorned mission statements; only the *Times* is favored with subjective comments, the tone of which is unabashedly pejorative.

If you judge the *Times* by standards different from those used to judge other newspapers, you should define them in CJR's pages for your readers.

**WALTER P. HERZ**

CINCINNATI, OHIO

Dom Bonafede replies: *Mr. Herz seems to be excessively exercised by my rather tepid observation that The New York Times's legislative affairs reporting is "less distinguished" than in past years. The reference, of course, is to the time when reporters of the caliber of Steve Roberts covered Capitol Hill for the paper. Mr. Herz should be aware I was reporting the sentiments shared by many Washington media addicts (including some Washington bureau members of the Times). More significantly, to merely state that the paper's legislative affairs reporting is "less distinguished" than traditionally found in the Times does not rule out that it may still better than that of a vast majority of newspapers.*

*Finally, in commenting that there are*

*"signs of less pontifical and more sprightly writing" in the Times's Washington reports, I am paying it a high compliment, indeed.*

## A BRAVO FOR UNGER

As a journalist who is also working on the October Surprise story, I want to say Bravo! to Craig Unger for his response to Rich Thomas of *Newsweek* (CJR, September/October). I was not aware that Mr. Thomas was an expert on covert operations.

Even *Time* magazine said in July 1983 that it could identify "at least a score" of American companies that were smuggling equipment to Iran. As far as anyone knows, few if any of these companies were ever prosecuted. Any good journalist would leave open the possibility that they may have had official protection.

So Ari Ben-Menashe can't pass a polygraph? Neither can Manucher Ghorbanifar, who even the CIA didn't want to deal with after he burned out about ten of their polygraph machines in a row. But to *The New York Times* Ghorbanifar is a credible source who gets to write an op-ed piece denouncing the October Surprise story as the concoction of a bunch of sleazy little arms dealers. I should like to have seen Al Capone's op-ed piece on the St. Valentine's Day Massacre!

**JON ARNOLD**

CHICAGO, ILL.

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Application forms may be obtained from Charles R. Eisendrath, Executive Director, The Livingston Awards, 2080 Frieze Bldg./105 S. State St., The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109. Telephone: (313) 764-2424.



Mollie Parnis Livingston,  
founder

## Judging Panel

Ken Auletta,  
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John Chancellor, commentator, NBC News

Richard M. Clurman,  
former chief of correspondents, Time-Life Publications

Osborn Elliott  
professor of journalism, Columbia University

Ellen Goodman, columnist, *The Boston Globe*

Charlayne Hunter-Gault,  
national correspondent, *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*

Robert C. Maynard,  
publisher, *The Oakland Tribune*

Mike Wallace, correspondent, CBS News

# CHRONICLE

## WHO'S OUT TO LUNCH HERE?

I.F. Stone  
and the KGB

What follows is a drama — some might say soap opera — in several acts, with an international cast, involving I.F. Stone, the KGB, free lunches, and mountains built of molehills.

It begins with an apparently offhand remark made by a former "high-ranking" KGB official (is there any other kind?) during an appearance at Exeter University in England on March 11. The speaker was Oleg Kalugin, a former major general in the KGB who had worked as a press officer at the Soviet embassy in Washington (see "The Spy Who Gave Me a Scoop," *CJR*, November/December 1990). Among other things, Kalugin discussed the problems the KGB had had in recruiting agents during the cold war. Andrew Brown, a reporter for the London *Independent*, summarized his comments in a ten-paragraph story that included this quotation, which set the whole plot in motion.

"We had an agent — a well-known American journalist — with a good reputation, who severed his ties with us after 1956. I myself convinced him to resume them. But in 1968, after the invasion of Czechoslovakia ... he said he would never again take any money from us."

Brown's story in *The Independent* caught the eye of Herbert Romerstein, a former employee of the House Committee on Un-American Activities



and, from 1983 to 1989, director of the U.S. Information Agency's Office to Counter Soviet Active Measures and Disinformation. In a column in the June 6 issue of *Human Events*, a Washington-based conservative weekly, Romerstein cited the quotation and elaborated on it. He said he had learned — from a "retired high-ranking KGB officer" who "insisted on remaining anonymous" — that Kalugin's unnamed "agent" was the unabashedly radical journalist I.F. Stone. Furthermore, Stone had been on the KGB payroll "for more than two decades."

Other voices added to the litany of charges. Reed Irvine, chairman of Accuracy in Media, a politically conservative pressure group, reported in its newsletter that Stone had been "paid with Kremlin gold" for "at least 15 years." Ray Kerrison, a columnist for the *New York Post*, moved a step further, stating that Stone had served "15 years as the KGB's front man in American journalism." As proof of per-

### A skirmish over the reputation of the late I.F. Stone has been playing out in print.

fidy, all the writers cited Stone's consistent criticism of U.S. foreign policy. End of Act One.

"Izzy" Stone had achieved considerable celebrity by the time of his death at age eighty-one in 1989, but he had little influence on the mainstream media during the years he stands accused of being, in Kerrison's words, "a propaganda shill" for the KGB. Before establishing *I.F. Stone's Weekly* in 1953, he had worked for several short-lived experimental dailies with limited readership. His *Weekly* had a circulation of only about 25,000 in the mid-1960s. He moved from obscurity to legend only later in his life. As one writer recalled, "His reports were ignored by his colleagues, who, years later, would review his books (based largely on his earlier published material) and honor him as the conscience of the Washington press corps...."

Today, he remains an icon for many liberal journalists, some of whom leapt to defend him against the charge that he had been a KGB dupe. In the process,

they helped push the issue from the right-wing fringe into the mainstream.

In an article for *The Nation*, D.D. Guttenplan, a former reporter for *New York Newsday* now at work on a biography of Stone (and a CJR contributing editor), attributed the "smear" to "a new generation of witch hunters." He said that he had talked to Kalugin — the source of the original quotation — and that Kalugin had denied ever recruiting Stone for the KGB or paying him any money. Guttenplan added that, in any case, Stone, who regularly challenged the Soviet party line, "would have been a lousy investment."

A *New York Times* editorial called the allegations "not just repugnant but grotesque." To *The Washington Post*, they were "completely undocumented and poisonous."

It was at about this point that the debate shifted to the subject of lunch.

In early September, Kalugin told several journalists attending a *Nation*-sponsored conference held in Moscow that, while he had indeed been referring to Stone in his Exeter speech, he had not meant that Stone had been a paid KGB agent — only that he had sometimes lunched on the Soviet tab. He went on to say that by "agent" he had simply meant a useful contact, not an intelligence tool. After 1968, he said, Stone refused to let the Russians buy him any more lunches.

Andrew Brown, the *Independent* writer who covered Kalugin's speech in March, checked in with his own clarification. In an article in the October 8 issue of *The New York Review of Books*, he said his original story had focused on Russian domestic troubles, but his editors had wanted more on spying. Dictating straight from his notes, he

**Former KGB Major General Oleg Kalugin**



REUTERS/BETTMANN

added the critical anecdote at the last minute. Material that was deleted, as indicated by the ellipsis in the original published story, would have made clear

## SOUND BITE

**G**racious Father, investigative reporting seems epidemic in an election year — its primary objective to defame political candidates. Seeking their own reputation, they destroy another's as they search relentlessly, microscopically for some ancient skeleton in a person's life. Eternal God, help these self-appointed vacuum-cleaner journalists to discover how unproductive and divisive their efforts are."

Senate Chaplain Richard C. Halverson, as quoted in *Esquire*

what he understood Kalugin to mean at the time: that the then-unidentified "American journalist" had not been an intelligence agent but merely someone who was useful to talk to; that he had not been paid any money, but only taken to lunch.

That might have been the end of it, but for a couple of subplots having to do with the whereabouts of Stone's personal papers, on the one hand, and capitalist economics, on the other.

Romerstein, the point man in the attack on Stone, introduced the first subplot in a July 30 opinion piece for the *New York Post*. He said Guttenplan had "revealed" that Stone's family "had destroyed" all of his personal papers after his death. A subsequent *Post* editorial had Stone "destroying many of his personal papers before he died," while his family "got rid of the rest." Both the *Post* and Romerstein found it incriminating that Stone's papers had not been preserved and donated to some university archive. As Romerstein put it, "someone had something to hide."

In fact, Guttenplan countered in the *Post* and *The Nation*, he did not tell Romerstein that the papers had been destroyed, only that they did not exist. "Stone left no archives — regrettable, perhaps, but hardly grounds for an inquisition," he wrote. A family

spokesman, meanwhile, says nothing was destroyed; Stone left no papers because he spent his time writing for publication, not writing and filing letters.

Guttenplan contributed the entrepreneurial subplot. Writing in the September 28 *Nation*, he said the confusion over what the KGB's Kalugin had said and what he had meant "can perhaps be best understood as a display of capitalist tactics." He suggested Kalugin had deliberately clouded the issue as part of an effort to secure a publisher for his memoirs.

Whatever the final act, the matter of I.F. Stone and the KGB can serve as a model of overreaction. Three sentences, added on deadline to a brief news story in a London paper, generated a warmed-over cold-war rhubarb that lasted for months. It was, on balance, less a drama than an exercise in the theater of the absurd.

Cassandra Tate

*Tate, a frequent contributor to CJR, is completing a Ph.D. in history at the University of Washington.*

## A LIGHT IN THE CLOSET

### India's Only Gay Publication

For the past year, about 2,500 subscribers to *Bombay Dost*, India's only gay and lesbian publication, have been receiving a packet of five condoms, along with instructions in English and Hindi. "I wish we had money to send fifty condoms per issue, for I believe each issue has at least fifty pass-along



**"We intend to empower millions of gays, but we are acutely aware that we ought to move slowly."**

— Ashok Row Kavi, editor and publisher of *Bombay Dost*

readers," says publisher and editor Ashok Row Kavi.

*Dost* means friend in Hindi, and despite the word *Bombay* in its name, the magazine is widely copied and read all across India, a country where homosexual acts are illegal.

Prejudice against gay people is strong in India. Gay activists say this bias is an import from the West, since the Hindu religion does not proscribe homosexuality and there is no evidence of homophobia in pre-colonial Indian history. "A single person is seen as an antisocial unit," Kavi says, "unless he or she is a member of a religious organization." Most prominent gays in India have stayed in the closet and, except for a recent movie in which a gay character plays a major role, the Indian film industry has eschewed gay themes.

Kavi, who is forty-five, shocked thousands of his readers in the mainstream daily newspaper *Indian Express* when he openly declared his sexual preference a decade ago. He helped to launch *Bombay Dost* as a sporadic underground newsletter in the late 1980s and to take it above ground, as a quarterly, last year. More recently, he quit his job as *Bombay* bureau chief of *The Sunday Mail* to work full-time on the magazine, which he plans to turn into a bimonthly next year.

*Bombay Dost* tries to spread a message. "We are trying to tell gays and lesbians across India that it is not only okay to be a homosexual, but that they shouldn't feel any guilt about it and learn to enjoy their sexuality," Kavi says. The magazine promotes safe sex, as in the condom distribution, and it carries news about gays worldwide, reviews of books, plays, and movies with gay themes, and highlights gay activist groups.

Although for most of its existence *Dost* had no advertising, "that is changing," Kavi says. And circulation is growing. But the editors have avoided newsstand sales and big subscription drives and publicity campaigns. "We are scared that there could be a social backlash, for which we are not prepared just as yet," Kavi says.

Arthur J. Pais.  
Pais, a New York-based free-lance writer,  
recently visited India, his home country.

## SALARY WATCH

### The TV Story

Not even television-news employees, who used to count on steadily fatter paychecks, have escaped the media recession. While the Consumer Price Index went up 4.7 percent from June 1990 to June 1991, the average salaries for television producers and reporters showed no real gain from 1990 to 1991, according to a study of 353 television stations by University of Missouri journalism professor Vernon Stone. Average anchorpersons in every market were making less last year than in 1990 — 12 percent less at network affiliates in the top twenty-five markets, 6 percent less at independent stations in those markets. In other markets there

was a 1 to 2 percent decrease. Stone's study also showed an increasing disparity between the highest-paid and the average employee's salary.

"Thousands of broadcast newspeople took cuts in purchasing power last year," Stone says. "For the most part, salary levels either rose less than the cost of living, went unchanged, or even dropped." (The average American's earnings adjusted for inflation dropped from \$7.57 to \$7.48 an hour — down 1.2 percent — from June 1990 to June 1991.) Stone, who is collecting 1992 data, expects the trend to continue.

The reasons for the change remain the same regardless of the size of the market — a sagging economy combined with increased competition from CNN and other cable news channels. "It's supply and demand — the most fundamental law of any economic system," says David Bartlett, president of the Radio-Television News Directors Association. "In the late '70s and early '80s, when ABC News started to come

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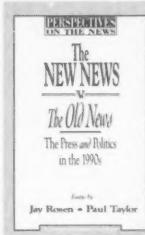
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on strong, salaries shot up. At the network level, they were trying to lure talent away from NBC and CBS. The other stations had to compete. Local stations followed suit.

"Now competition, across the board, is different," he says. "Consequently, many people are being given a choice — either leave when their contract is up or stay and take a cut in pay."

Bartlett adds that in the past unions had more influence on salaries, but now, "the only leverage a union has is to keep labor from the employer. If an employer can do without them, the union has no real strength." He cites the 1987 strike at NBC by NABET, the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians, as an

## Thousands of broadcast newspeople took cuts in purchasing power last year

example. The union remained on strike for seventeen weeks while General Electric, the network's parent company, replaced some people with non-union workers. "GE essentially said, Stay on strike as long as you want. That's a recipe for undermining a union," Bartlett says.

An AFTRA spokesperson would say only that the union is "concerned" about the salary situation, but would not elaborate. NABET officials declined to comment.

According to Barbara Frye, the director of talent placement at Frank Magid Associates, the well-known Marion, Iowa, news consulting firm, there are no signs of an upturn in television incomes in the future. "It may become more profitable to work in medium-sized markets in the future," she says. "The money may be the same, but your money will go farther. You could make \$50,000 in Los Angeles or in Gary, Indiana. Everyone knows where your dollar is going to stretch farther."

Lisa Tozzi

Tozzi was recently an intern at CJR.

## BY THE BOOK

### The Evangelical Investigators

It seems an unlikely combination — investigative reporting and the evangelical Christian press. But it's a workaday reality for Jon Trott and Mike Hertenstein, the Woodward and Bernstein of their particular beat. Trott and Hertenstein write for *Cornerstone* magazine, which started out in the early 1970s as a handout published as part of the ministry of Jesus People USA, an evangelical Christian community in Chicago's inner city. Over the years it evolved into an oversize magazine with wild graphics, arts reviews, interviews, theological and social commentary, and investigative stories, and now claims a circulation of some 50,000.

Their evangelical Christianity aside, Trott and Hertenstein differ from their mainstream counterparts in several ways. For one thing, they live communally with about 400 other Jesus People in a ten-story building that was once a luxury hotel. Living communally means that from time to time the investigative duo must report to the kitchen for dishwashing duty. Another difference: they

**Mike Hertenstein (left)  
and Jon Trott**



## SOUND BITE

**P**art of the problem is that many reporters tend to absorb the language of their sources and consider it normal. But the sources are often activists bending language to push private agendas. Cover the disability-rights movement long enough, and you, too, may find yourself tapping out "mentally and physically challenged," although you may not be the slightest bit verbally challenged yourself."

John Leo, *U.S. News & World Report*

don't draw a salary but live from a common purse, from which they receive money for everything from tickets to a movie to a new pair of sneakers. (The community's income comes from several sources, including a Jesus People roofing company, a painting company, and a woodworking shop.) Bibles are more common in the office than *Roget's Thesaurus*, and the Kaypro computers are antediluvian.

Neither Trott nor Hertenstein has had any journalistic training. Trott, who is thirty-five, dropped out of college. Hertenstein, four years younger, joined the Jesus People straight out of high school. Both worked at various other jobs in the community, including roofing and house painting, before joining the magazine staff.

Trott took on his first major investigation in 1989. The subject was Lauren Stratford, the author of *Satan's Underground*, who claimed in her book and in talks to church groups that she was a survivor of satanic ritual abuse. Trott and two colleagues scrutinized her claims and concluded that her story was a complete fabrication.

More recently, Trott and Hertenstein checked out the story of a stand-up comic and evangelist named Mike Warnke, who bills himself as "America's number one Christian

Comedian" and has sold more than a million records and tapes. Warnke had built a twenty-year career on claims that he had been a drug addict and high priest in a rich and powerful church of Satan before converting to Christianity. For a 20,000-word article that appeared in *Cornerstone* this past July, Trott and Hertenstein interviewed Warnke's "closest friends, relatives, and daily associates," who "knew the real Mike Warnke, who was not a drug fiend or a recruiter for Satan. But he was a storyteller." The orphan-to-drug-addict-to-Satanist-to-Christian saga laid out in Warnke's best-selling book, *The Satan Seller*, doesn't jibe with other evidence, Trott and Hertenstein wrote, or even with accounts in Warnke's other books and tapes. Word Inc., a subsidiary of ABC-Capital Cities, has halted the sale of Warnke's records until he answers questions raised by the *Cornerstone* article and subsequent coverage.

*Cornerstone* writers answer to a board of pastors, including editor Dawn Herrin. When they discuss their journalism, they talk about ethical standards based on the Bible, say, or their responsibility as Christian journalists to expose wrongdoing among fellow Christians.

"Even if something is uncomfortable to us, or will be detrimental to us or our Christian cause," Trott says, "we feel that as Christian journalists we have to tell the truth about that."

"We always remind ourselves, Don't take pleasure in destroying people," Hertenstein adds. "We can take joy in the hunt, but you can't be excited that you've got the dirt."

Trott joined Investigative Reporters and Editors this past spring, in time for *Cornerstone* to put the IRE logo on the masthead of its Warnke edition. During their investigation of the comedian, the two reporters took the IRE handbook into courthouses as a manual for learning their way through records rooms. "We just went by the book," Hertenstein recalls. "By about the fourth courthouse, we were Batman and Robin."

Jay C. Grelen

*Grelen is a reporter for the Lexington, Kentucky, Herald-Leader, for which he wrote several stories about Warnke.*

## FIRST AMENDMENT FREEDOMS



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**For information and entry blanks:** Jan Boudart, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University, 1845 Sheridan Road, Evanston, Illinois 60208, (708) 491-5661 Fax# (708) 491-3956.

## FELLOWSHIPS IN EUROPE

Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism is again seeking applicants for travel fellowships for American journalists.

The John J. McCloy Fellowships, sponsored by the American Council on Germany, offer three-week study trips for U.S. journalists wishing to write about Germany.

The Journalists in Europe Foundation offers scholarship assistance to journalists under 35 for a nine-month program, based in Paris, to study European Community developments and institutions.

Deadlines are February 1, 1993.

Applications are available from:

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# CROSSFIRE IN SOUTH AFRICA

## Why Reporters Are More Vulnerable Now

Journalists covering South Africa in the 1980s occasionally had rocks thrown at their cars by black youths. Now those rocks have been replaced by *pangas* (machetes) and bullets, leaving reporters increasingly wary of covering certain stories.

Once seen by township residents as adjuncts to the struggle against white minority rule, local and foreign journalists, both black and white, are now regularly attacked physically by politicized youths and verbally by newly legalized black political parties that resent any criticism of their organizations during this period of transition. The breakdown in negotiations between the government and the anti-apartheid forces this June increased this sense of militancy and intolerance to criticism, and violent incidents — like the slaughters in Boipatong in June and in Ciskei in September — do not help.

"Our editor will run an editorial and suddenly we find it very difficult for us to go and cover a story," says Robert Magwaza, chief photographer of *The Sowetan*, South Africa's largest black daily. "You'll be seen as siding with the government."

Prior to President F.W. de Klerk's reforms in February 1990, which began South Africa's transition to democracy, black and white journalists worried mostly about harassment by the security police, who confiscated their film, beat them, and threw them in jail. "In '76 [during the Soweto student uprising] we used to transport kids shot by the cops to the hospital," Magwaza recalls. "We are now safer on the side of the police than on the side of the people."

Since that period, black journalists have been bearing the brunt of attacks by members of the ANC, the Pan-Africanist Congress, and Inkatha because they live in the segregated

townships and are expected to be the mouthpiece of each party as it jostles for position. When reporters refuse, they become targets for attack. During the ANC-led general strike in August, for example, 300 ANC youths surrounded *Sowetan* reporter Pat Seboko and threatened to "necklace" him with a burning tire for working at the newspaper.

With the rise in the level of township violence, the number of racially motivated attacks on white journalists has also increased, particularly since the June 17 Boipatong massacre, in which Inkatha-supporting migrant workers raided an ANC-dominated township, leaving forty dead. "When you take an emotional incident like Boipatong, and the police — who are mainly white — take no interest in the investigation, one can understand these feelings of anger," says Raymond Louw, chairman of South Africa's Campaign for an Open Media.

On August 3 in Evaton, a township near Boipatong, four young thugs hijacked and shot two white journalists, Phillip van Niekerk, an investigative reporter for South Africa's liberal *Weekly Mail*, and Paul Taylor, a *Washington Post* correspondent. A black journalist traveling with them escaped unharmed. As the two men begged for help and black township residents walked past, a crowd gathered and someone said, "Let's just finish them off," according to Felix Gabanakosi, a local man who witnessed the scene. Van Niekerk was shot in the head and Taylor in the chest, but both men survived.

"The special protection that the journalists had has ended," says John Battersby, a reporter for *The Christian Science Monitor* and vice-chairman of South Africa's Foreign Correspondents Association.

Political parties must bear some of the blame for the rising hostility toward journalists. A regional branch of the ANC called for a boycott of an Eastern Cape paper, for example, demanding an end to its "continuous ANC bashing." (ANC president Nelson Mandela, however, has continually expressed sympathy for the problems faced by journalists.) The black consciousness-oriented Pan-Africanist Congress, meanwhile,

sent a message to its followers ordering them not to cooperate with television crews from the local South African Broadcasting Corporation during a strike last June. This translated into trouble for anyone with a television camera. Radical PAC youths threatened to necklace a foreign television crew covering a soccer game in July.

"The media themselves aren't blameless," says *Weekly Mail* editor Anton Harber. "There is anger among activists that they don't have equal access to press coverage." Yet in a country where freedom of the press under a black government is no more certain than it was under the repressive rule of apartheid, Harber predicts that in a new South Africa, "we will still have many fights over the freedom of the press."

Jennifer Griffin

Griffin is a free-lance journalist who lives in Johannesburg.

## FALSE PRETENSES

### Can the FBI Use Your Name?

In the spring of 1987, convicted Soviet spy Ronald Pelton tried to contact Don Devereux, then a free-lance reporter for the Scottsdale, Arizona, *Progress*. Pelton knew of Devereux from a fellow inmate at the Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, federal prison whom Devereux had interviewed several times back in Arizona, where the man had been convicted of homicide. The convict told Pelton he would set up a meeting with the reporter.

Instead of contacting Devereux, however, the convict, hoping for a reduction in his sentence, got in touch with the FBI, alerting the bureau to the fact that Pelton wanted to talk. The FBI promptly sent a female agent posing as Devereux's attorney to see Pelton in Lewisburg. Believing that he was speaking to a representative of a journalist, Pelton rewarded the FBI with a

## SOUND BITE

**“Y**ou get off the air some days and you want to have a shower. I don't think the people of Los Angeles are well served by their local television. I'm probably saying way too much, but somebody in this business has to tell the people in this city they're getting screwed."

Keith Morrison, former reporter and anchor at KNBC-TV in Los Angeles, who left in August to host *Canada A.M.* in his home country, as quoted in the *Los Angeles Times*.

lot more information than had come to light during his trial.

More than two years passed before the convict — now angry that his sentence had been barely reduced — passed the word to Devereux that his name and credentials had been appropriated by the FBI. Ever since, Devereux has been trying to nail down the facts of the case and to stop government agencies from impersonating people of the press for their own ends. It has been an uphill fight all the way.

One of the first steps he took was to contact Investigative Reporters and Editors and the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. These organizations helped him — through numerous Freedom of Information Act requests and letters to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence — to confirm that a meeting had indeed taken place between Pelton and a person who claimed to represent Devereux. The Reporters Committee also obtained the attorney general's "Guidelines on FBI Undercover Operations for Criminal Matters." Impersonation of reporters, Devereux learned, was not forbidden so long as it has been approved by FBI headquarters.

He also learned that the whole issue of federal agents impersonating journalists had been debated in Congress in

1984, when it came up as part of a bill, later defeated, to regulate FBI undercover operations. As part of the debate the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the American Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Society of Professional Journalists all took a stand against any provision that would permit government infiltration of news organizations or permit government agents to impersonate journalists.

In attempting to revive the issue, Devereux has turned to organizations as diverse as the National Council of Churches, which promised this summer "to continue to be alert to the issue," and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, which helped him find one more piece of the puzzle. The group put him in contact with a Pennsylvania attorney whose name is the same as that of the woman who posed as his attorney in the 1987 prison interview. The Pennsylvania branch of the Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers is expected to file a complaint about the impersonation with the Pennsylvania Bar Association before the end of the year.

This past February, Devereux learned from two letters released by the Senate Select Committee in response to his earlier FOIA request that, as a result of his inquiries, guidelines requiring approval from headquarters before an agent can pose as a journalist will be extended to FBI counterintelligence operations.

Devereux, who now works for NBC's *Unsolved Mysteries* and the Arts & Entertainment Network's *Investigative Reports*, doesn't consider the policy change much of an accomplishment. And he is discouraged by the lack of attention his situation has received from the press. His impersonation story has been reported only in the Reporters Committee's publication, *The News Media & The Law*, in *The Phoenix Gazette*, and in his own newsletter, which he distributes from time to time to some 200 journalists nationwide.

"If we don't jump up and down vigorously now, this practice will just expand," he says.

Marcia Gelbart  
Gelbart, a student at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, was recently an intern at CIR.

# HOW THE COUNTRY GETS THINGS DONE

ONE IN A SERIES



When the new general practitioner and his wife arrived in Weiser, Idaho, they were welcomed with a parade and a barbecue. Not surprising when you hear that only a handful of new doctors plan to practice in rural areas. And that's only a small part of the health care problem that rural communities face. That's why a number of rural electric co-ops are helping to get something done. In Lindsay, Oklahoma, the only hospital was kept

open after the folks at the local co-op went to work rallying public support for a special sales tax. In other parts of the country, co-ops help keep ambulances running, organize community health fairs and provide satellite hook-ups between medical facilities. Why are rural electric co-ops so involved? Because we know that good health care is essential for economic prosperity. So what we're doing for a healthier community is good medicine for the economy too.



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# DARTS AND LAURELS

◆ **DART** to WTSP-TV, the ABC affiliate in the Tampa-St. Petersburg market, and news director Mike Cavender, for being a journalistic spoilsport. A few days before the station's rival, NBC affiliate WFLA, was to begin telecasting the Olympic Games from Barcelona, Cavender signaled his sports staff to stress in their early evening newscasts throughout the events "U.S. losses and/or disappointments." The game plan? "If someone is expected to win a medal and doesn't or someone is expected to go gold and ends up with a bronze," ran Cavender's July 22 memo, "I want it played in the sportscast." The goal? "The more disappointment that we can tell the viewers about the more they may not be inclined to watch as much prime time coverage on Channel 8 [WFLA]. And that is good news for us." On July 24, the memo showed up in the *St. Petersburg Times*; later that day, WTSP's president and general manager, Steve Mauldin, showed up on his station's six o'clock news, with an apology to viewers.

◆ **DART** to the Columbus, Indiana, *Republic*, for its less than divine coverage of the Clyde Dupin Crusade. Inspired by the program of prayer meetings, youth marches, and ladies' teas emphasizing, as the evangelist told *The Republic*, "a lifestyle that belongs to Christians, one that's different from the Murphy Brown lifestyle," the paper apparently made a decision for Dupin: his crusade begat more than 130 column inches of copy, comprising some nine separate stories (five, including a banner story, on the paper's front page), plus eleven photos featuring Dupin and his team. One particular headline not likely to get *The Republic* into journalistic heaven: DUPIN SET TO DEAL CHRIST'S BEST HAND.

◆ **DART** to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, for overrunning the base. When San Francisco Giants owner Bob Lurie announced on August 8 that he had made a deal to sell the franchise to a group of Tampa Bay investors and that the team would be moving next season to the greener fields of the Florida Seacoast Dome, the *Chronicle* swung into a desperate campaign to keep the Giants at home. Its pitch included a page-one, above-the-masthead "call ... for a late-inning rally" — namely, that the business and civic community support the efforts of a local purchasing group to match or surpass the Floridians' \$113,000,000 bid — and a plea to Lurie to "go the extra mile"; "Save

the Giants" coupons for readers to mail in with expressions of love for the team; participation by the *Chronicle's* executive editor, William German, in strategy-planning meetings with the mayor's representative; and the spiking of a column by sportswriter Bruce Jenkins and the reworking of another by sportswriter Glenn Dickey, on the off-base theory, apparently, that their hostile response to Lurie's announcement would not be helpful to the cause. Even Herb Caen, the paper's star columnist, got tagged; he was asked, and agreed, to revise the tone of his "Black Friday" piece to reflect not despair, but hope; in similarly curved editing, the headline over a story about the effect of the Giants' departure on Mayor Frank Jordan's political future was changed from JORDAN WILL GET THE BLAME TO A LATE RALLY COULD STILL SAVE JORDAN. Reviewing the "censoring of our coverage" play-by-play in an August 24 memo to city editor Dan Rosenheim, political writer Susan Yoachum summed up the score: "I was forced to draw the conclusion that the *Chronicle's* corporate and monetary interests were influencing its Giants' coverage — the type of conflict of interest story that interests us every day. Shame on us."

◆ **LAUREL** (belatedly) to the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* and reporters Joe Rigert and Maura Lerner, for "Safeguards That Kill," a disquieting four-part series (December 2-5, 1990), raising grave doubts about the safety of those restraining belts, vests, and jackets which — contrary to more humane, and more effective, practices in Europe and Canada — are used every day on some 500,000 elderly Americans, many of them in nursing homes: at least 200 people a year, the series revealed, are strangling or suffocating in the very devices intended to protect them. Two days after the series ended, the FDA announced that it would begin an investigation of the deaths it had previously ignored. Over the next eighteen months the agency issued medical alerts for caution in use of the restraints, decided that prescriptions for the device would henceforth be required, and, on June 2, proposed new warning-label rules. The agency also put out, on June 16, a press release summarizing its earlier actions. Not coincidentally, perhaps, the summary was issued only hours before NBC's *Dateline* was scheduled to air its segment on the subject. Wrapping up her graphic report, NBC correspondent Michele Gillen asked, "What does the fed-

eral government plan to do about this? The FDA told us that, effective immediately, all manufacturers of restraints are going to have to prove — this for the first time — that the restraints are actually safe and effective... the FDA says, in part, because of the body of evidence we've brought forward." Much of "the body of evidence brought forward," however, appears to have been prompted by the *Star Tribune's* series (a copy of which had been requested by an NBC producer some six months before), and relied on one of the series' prime consultants as its key on-camera source. To be sure, the paper got a credit for providing "production assistance." But as *Star Tribune* executive editor Tim McGuire observed in a July 1 letter to NBC News president Michael Gartner, "The text of the proposed new FDA rule, which was faxed to the *Star Tribune* by the local office two days before the NBC broadcast 'announced' it as that day's news event, cites the *Star Tribune's* project 10 times in its list of 34 reference materials that have been placed on display in Washington in support of the proposal.... There is no mention of NBC or any other news organization."

◆ **DART** to John Gates, editorial page editor of the *Winston-Salem Journal*, for lending his professional credibility to a journalistic smokescreen. The July issue of *Choice*, "The Journal of the Smokers' Rights Movement," published by R.J. Reynolds, the company in Gates's North Carolina company town, focuses on the burning question of how to use the media to build support for its cause, primarily through letters to the editor. Along with admiring profiles of tobacco-stained epistolarians, *Choice's* glossy, four-color pages were fully packed with an appeal to join Reynolds's letter-writing club (goal: 1,000 published letters a month); the names and addresses of some targeted newspapers, broadcast stations, and magazines; suggested points to be included — and tips from Gates on improving the chances of seeing your letter in print.

◆ **LAUREL** to *The Miami Herald*, and to WTVJ-TV weathercaster Bryan Norcross, for becoming real ports in a storm. Slammed by the awesome winds of Hurricane Andrew, its staffers unsure of the fate of their families and homes, the *Herald* miraculously managed to stay on top of the story of the worst natural disaster in the nation's history. Bringing out an extra edition under next-to-impossible conditions in the early hours of the morning after Andrew struck; distributing, with the help of the paper's top executives, free copies in English and Spanish — some 40,000 a day, for two post-Andrew weeks, to every house that looked lived in; presenting an organized mass of news about the storm and its aftermath, along with column after column of practical help with essential human needs, the *Herald* provided a beacon of light to its many readers. At the same time, the paper's television critic, Hal Boedeker,

went out of his way in an August 30 column to focus attention on the strong performances by local reporters and anchors at stations WSVN and WPLG and, most memorably, by WTJV's Norcross, who stayed on the air for twenty-three consecutive hours, counseling terrified



listeners and dispensing life-saving information. "Now is the time to find a closet in the inside of your home and get everything out of it," the meteorologist warned his listeners. "The last-resort place you're going to be is the back of that closet with a transistor radio and a mattress over the top of you, and we'll tell you when it's okay to come out." They went. He did. And, as *Herald* staff writer Tracie Cone, clearly speaking for millions of Norcross fans, put it in a September 20 feature on the "Hurricane Hero," "We can't thank him enough."

◆ **DART** to WBRC-TV, Birmingham, Alabama, for monkeying around with its credibility. Outfoxing the competition — most notably, WBMG-TV — which in recent months had produced biting reports on serious management problems at the Birmingham city zoo, WBRC came up with a plan to change the institution's spots. In an April 28 letter to zookeeper Jerry Wallace, WBRC president Craig Millar proposed a "joint marketing plan" whereby his station would provide, among other things, editorials in support of the zoo; a zoo animal of the week segment in its noon and 5 P.M. newscasts; commercials for the zoo parroted by the station's "talent"; weathercasts live from the zoo "when there is a particular event we feel we should plug"; and a station-driven flock of mailings, telethons, and fundraising fairs. And what would the station expect in return? "To be the only station with programs and features produced at and with the zoo.... In other words, exclusivity." The seal was put on the contract in June. In a September 4 article in the *Birmingham Post-Herald* on the "caging" of the public zoo, Millar was reported as denying that the agreement would have any effect on its news coverage. (Was that the sound of a hyena, laughing?) ◆

*This column is compiled and written by Gloria Cooper, CJR's managing editor, to whom nominations should be addressed.*

# COVERING A RUNAWAY CAMPAIGN

By D.D. Guttenplan



**T**his was supposed to be a whole different ballgame. This year, we pledged, the press wasn't going to fall for any of those flag-factory photo-ops that made a mockery of campaign coverage in 1988.

This year, reporters vowed, candidates wouldn't be allowed to keep dodging the press, or their opponents, or tough questions on major issues.

This year the media swore off distractions like the Pledge of Allegiance or membership in the ACLU. And you'd have to do a lot better than Willie Horton to get free media embarrassing your opponent this time around.

As it happens, most of these promises have been



kept. It is by now apparent that the lessons of Campaign '88 have been learned and applied — just in time for Campaign '92, which promptly rendered them irrelevant.

In 1988, Vice-President George Bush hid from the press for weeks at a time. One resourceful scribe even brought a megaphone to campaign events to shout his (invariably ignored) queries. In 1992 the candidates are everywhere. Ross Perot turned up on morning TV so often they practically had him reading the weather. Bill Clinton may hold the record for getting-on-*Donahue*-without-being-sexually-abused (though his father's alcoholism probably didn't hurt). And on July 1 former shrinking-violet George Bush actually invited *CBS This Morning* into the Rose Garden. Host Harry Smith asked the president, "Why did we continue to support Saddam Hussein even though we knew he was skimming U.S. support to help develop his nuclear arms?"

Bush: "I don't know where you got that, Harry."

Smith: "The State Department — there's a ..."

Bush: "The State Department didn't know it."

That Smith let Bush roll right over him is not all that surprising. He is, after all, the same journalist who responded to the news that Bush's economic plan was twenty-nine pages long — compared to twenty-two pages for Clinton's — with the observation: "That is certainly a more substantial plan, I guess, if it's got more pages in it."

Bush's Rose Garden performance is

*D.D. Guttenplan, who in addition to this article wrote the Campaign Timeline that starts on page 26, is a contributing editor of CJR. He covered the 1988 presidential race for The Village Voice and New York Newsday. Research assistance was provided by CJR interns Daniel Eisenberg, Marcia Gelbart, Rose Manzo, and Lisa Tozzi. The Timeline entries are based on news reports, the American Political Network's Campaign Hotline, and the Tyndall Report of network news coverage. CJR gratefully acknowledges support from the Deer Creek Foundation for this issue.*

worth recalling precisely because at the time it went almost unnoticed, even though the documents proving State Department knowledge of Iraqgate had been in the public record for months. In 1992, the problem isn't lack of access, it's lack of attention.

After four years of chanting "Won't Get Fooled Again," the press seems oddly passive, more spinned-against than spinning. There are exceptions, of course. But a report card on campaign coverage so far would have to show the media as classic underachievers: bright but bored.

The single most important story in the campaign — Patrick E. Tyler's front-page *New York Times* exposé of administration plans to bomb Baghdad to give Bush a boost at the GOP convention — created less stir than the news that Ross Perot might re-enter the race. The *Times*'s decision to play Tyler's piece the way it did — all the more remarkable for a paper that once sat on a story about plans for the Bay of Pigs invasion — drew less comment than the *New York Post*'s coverage of Bush's alleged extramarital affair.

**T**his time around, the information is not only out there, it's easier to find than ever before. Thanks to the American Political Network's invaluable Hotline, a daily on-line national sampling of print and electronic campaign-related stories, any reporter within reach of a modem can not only follow the fluctuations in the Conventional Wisdom (CW), but can also get tipped to unconventional reportage as soon as it surfaces. The Iraqgate scandal, for example, has been unfolding in the pages of the *Los Angeles Times*, *U.S. News & World Report*, and *The New York Times*, with some key boosts from *Nightline*. Hotline subscribers have been able to savor every new tidbit — or, if the spirit moves them, to try and advance the story. Computerized FEC filings made it possible for even the chronically underfunded *In These Times* to trace

nearly a third of Bill Clinton's donors to Wall Street firms — while the Hotline made John Judis's analysis in the weekly available to less diligent reporters around the country.

A less momentous use of a novel resource was *New York Times* reporter Andrew Rosenthal's witty dissection of George Bush, revolutionary rhetorician. Back when the president was trying to recast himself as "the change agent," Rosenthal, with the help of Presidential Documents, an electronic compilation of White House records, charted the rise of words like "revolution" and "change" in presidential speechifying and the decline of "prudent" and "cautious."

In 1988 the big problem was media manipulation. In 1992 that's still a problem, though this time around it's the Democrats who are the Sultans of Spin. Some observers credit this to Clinton's ability to digest hot political books, like E.J. Dionne's *Why Americans Hate Politics* or Thomas Byrne Edsall's *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics*, and regurgitate their essential arguments to admiring reporters (like Dionne or Edsall). Others suggest Clinton is the beneficiary of the press corps' generational hunger, not so much for a president who knows the words to "Louie, Louie" as for a chance at the levers of power (and the attendant perks) which a rising generation of policy wonks have been lusty after for over a decade.

The big problem in 1992 is the crushing consensus about what is, and is not, subject to political debate. George Bush can be attacked for proposing a capital gains tax cut, and Bill Clinton hailed (or assailed) for proposing a tiny increase in the top rate, without any sustained reporting on the overall tax burden in the U.S., on how little Americans get for their taxes, or on how none of the candidates proposes to do anything about the widening gap between rich and poor.

Bill Clinton made encouraging noises about banking reform to William Greider during his *Rolling Stone* interview, but Clinton's free-trade rhetoric and apparent comfort with "having a

higher percentage of people at lower wage levels" left Greider asking, "Which side are you really on?" Still, Greider deserves credit for raising the question, and even more credit for trying to break some taboos with his PBS program *Betrayal of Democracy*, which, with Bill Moyers's PBS series *Listening to America*, represent the high watermarks of televised politics this year. Moyers's adaptation of Donald Barlett and James Steele's *Philadelphia Inquirer* series "America: What Went Wrong?" is also a refreshing departure from the governing myth of campaign coverage: that the choice between two (or three) men is an adequate substitute for a real debate about the reign of money in U.S. politics or the responsibilities of corporations to their workers.

**O**nly a vulgar Marxist would find the commercial networks' failure to tackle similar topics suggestive of anything more sinister than institutional sloth. When they did rouse themselves, the Big Three did a relatively creditable job of covering the surface of a campaign whose main events always seemed to be off-camera: on talk radio shows, or CNN, or in neighborhoods like South Central L.A. where the camera crews couldn't go. Koppel made his usual earnest effort to get to the bottom of whatever the *problem du nuit* happened to be, but *Nightline*'s reluctance to devote more than a night or two to any topic (and a guest list tilted heavily towards the CW) make Moyers look even better by comparison. Peter Jennings gets high marks for his decree that ABC would "only devote time to a candidate's daily routine if it is more than routine. There will be less attention to staged appearances and sound-bites designed exclusively for television." CBS also deserves kudos for its policy of expanding the sound-bite from 7.3 seconds to 30 seconds, though the network's quick retreat to 20 seconds turns a B-plus into a B-minus, and the Center for Media and Public Affairs' Vince Sollitto reports

backsliding to 17 seconds.

As a network NBC offered little in the way of innovation, but it did have Andrea Mitchell. Time and again Mitchell was the only reporter on a story, as when Bush vetoed campaign funding reform.

Perhaps the most notable feature of campaign print coverage is the spectacular irrelevance of the pundits. As the Sunday talk shows made painfully obvious, Bigfoot has become just another dinosaur lumbering along in a landscape it doesn't understand, making too much noise and chewing up the scenery for no apparent purpose. The only major columnist who did more than intone the CW was William Safire, whose internal struggle between hatred of Bush and distaste for the Democrats and all their works made for must reading. As Safire goes, so go a lot of other neo-cons, and Clinton's clandestine courtship of what might be called the Scoop Jackson wing of both parties (which surfaced briefly in an endorsement ad signed by such cold-war luminaries as Paul Nitze, Edward Luttwak, and Ed Koch) has to rank among the most under-reported stories of the campaign.

On campaign mechanics — inside baseball stories like Howard Kurtz's profile of Clinton media-whiz Mandy Grunwald, who put him on *Arsenio* and *Imus in the Morning*, or David Von Drehle's superb account of the tribulations of Bush's advance men — *The Washington Post* was untouchable. But the same inside-the-beltway perch made the paper's political reporting seem lackluster and conventional.

Once you got past *The New York Times* editorial page's relentless cheerleading for Clinton, on the other hand, the paper's news columns combined stylish writing (Maureen Dowd and Michael Kelly) with first-rate political reporting. The *Times* is a rich newspaper, so its depth of coverage ought to be a given (though the paper's dismissive treatment of Brown's candidacy proved that it isn't). What seemed new was the reporters' freedom to lead readers to evident, but slightly controversial, conclusions. Michael Kelly's deftly bal-

anced (but devastating) reports on the Perot phenomenon show what a reporter on a longer leash can do, though B. Drummond Ayres's hallucinatory account of Jesse Jackson as "a man beaten" at the Democratic convention suggests that some leashes need to be shorter than others. Even more striking were Andrew Rosenthal's virtuoso turns on how to provide context without hobbling your narrative: "I stand against those who use films or records or television or video games to glorify killing law enforcement officers," said Mr. Bush, who counts among his top supporters the actor Arnold Schwarzenegger, whose character in the movies *Terminator* and *Terminator II: Judgment Day* kills or maims dozens of policemen."

*New York Post* reporter Deborah Orin's coverage of Clinton's shift on abortion, which credits GOP sources but pursues a story most of the media ignored, also deserves honorable mention, as does Murray Waas and Doug Frantz's Iraqgate series in the *Los Angeles Times*, which put the pieces of Henry Gonzalez's jigsaw puzzle together for the public.

**H**ow bad was campaign coverage on the whole? Compared to what? Far, far better than coverage of the gulf war — a topic still so strangled by consensus that Mark Crispin Miller's two-part exposé of Pentagon prevarications (in the June 24 and September 15 *New York Times*) got less play than the TV debut of Sally Perdue, a former Miss Arkansas who told Sally Jessy Raphael she'd had an "encounter" with Clinton. And far worse than it should be. We treat the culture war as a sideshow, when in our system it's really the main event. We report a great deal about the individual candidates, and next to nothing about the interests they represent. We write at length on the candidates' attacks, and hardly at all on the underlying conflicts which shape our political choices.

# Tracking the Campaign

CLINTON WEATHERS HURRICANE GENNIFER.....BUT DRAFT WOES SEND PUNDITS INTO CUOMO DANCE.....PEROT'S PROFILE

MESSAGE OF THE WEEK

PRINT/EDITORIAL

TELEVISION

FEBRUARY 10-16

FEBRUARY 17-23

FEBRUARY 24-MARCH 8

MARCH 9-15

**TSONGAS:** "I'm not going to play Santa Claus. I'm not going to give people middle class tax cuts...."

**CLINTON:** Release of his draft letter to news media was part of a GOP "dirty tricks" campaign.

**KERRY:** No one can question his patriotism.

**BUCHANAN:** Bush doesn't care about average Americans.

**BUSH:** I do too.

**PEROT:** If you build it — a 50-state petition campaign — I will run.



**BUSH:** "Hey, since when is an 18-point victory been considered anything other than a landslide?"

**CLINTON:** Staying alive.

**TSONGAS:** I am electable.

**CLINTON:** I see a Seawolf in your future.

**KERRY:** "He [Clinton] is going to be opened up like a boiled peanut."

**TSONGAS:** "Where am I going tomorrow?" (After a speech to the South Dakota legislature was scrubbed in favor of a stockyard visit.)

**BUSH:** "Total mistake — policy, political, everything else.... But it was — spending caps is good.... But when you have to weigh a decision, in retrospect — have the benefit of hindsight — I would say both policy and politically, I think we can all agree that it's drawn a lot of fire." (Second thoughts about breaking his no-new-taxes pledge)

"Right now Clinton reminds me of a Civil War soldier with his stomach shot, leaning up against a tree...waiting to die," says Georgia pollster Claibourne Darden, quoted in *Wall Street Journal*. Candidate Harkin's victory in Iowa shows that if it's your home state, winning there isn't the only thing. It isn't anything at all.



*Washington Post* reporters Dan Balz and E.J. Dionne, Jr., dub Clinton "the Energizer bunny"; *Post* columnist Richard Cohen says he's "a natural." Cohen says the Arkansan "can talk on any subject. Political reporters, who see a lot of clods, are in awe of Clinton." At least at the *Post*.

Tsongas calls Clinton a "pander bear" — a sobriquet that will outlive the Man from Lowell's campaign. *Des Moines Register* plays taps for Iowa's fave son: Harkin is "out of money and probably can't survive." Evans and Novak say administration has plans "for a possible 'October Surprise' designed to rescue [Bush]" by ordering "U.S. air strikes against three juicy election-year targets."

*New York Times* editorials laud Clinton on Wednesday (for winning 75% of black vote in Georgia) and Sunday (for favoring aid to ex-Soviets).

Tom Griffith, anchor of WMUR, New Hampshire's most important news broadcast, gives Clinton a bye on the draft: "Any of us that grew up in that era understands that a student deferment by itself shouldn't be a liability, so I'm going to drop this...." National news does likewise, spending only 17 minutes on Clinton's troubles compared with 114 minutes on Dan Quayle the week he was nominated.



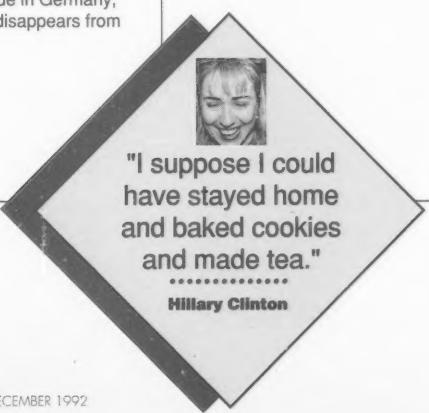
Paul Tsongas' unlikely win in New Hampshire doesn't keep him from getting dissed by all three networks: "A regional candidate," says NBC, plagued by "money problems" (CBS) and "out of step" (ABC). Besides, Pat Buchanan's strong (37%) second place makes a much juicier story: "We begin tonight," says Peter Jennings, "with a new word in President Bush's campaign vocabulary, 'Pat.'" Also on ABC, Brit Hume skewers Bush's efforts to play spin doctor: "The president had decided that an outcome that had to be the stuff of White House nightmares only weeks ago...wasn't so bad."

Jerry Brown does well in Maine, Kerry takes South Dakota, and Bill Clinton, who hasn't won a primary yet (but who is way ahead in fund-raising), still gets front-runner treatment. Brown's victory in Colorado still gets him no respect from Tom Brokaw, who ignores Brown's flat-tax proposal and ridicules the anti-PAC man for "solicit[ing] money like a TV preacher."



After Paul Tsongas stalls in Florida's primary, both ABC and NBC show the candidate's plane stuck in the mud.

BEGINS TO RISE....CLINTON AIDES SHOP "OTHER JENNIFER" STORIES....POLLSTERS SPELL NONE-OF-THE-ABOVE: P-E-R-O-T

| MARCH 16-22  | MARCH 23-29  | MARCH 30-APRIL 5   | APRIL 6-12  |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p><b>BUSH:</b> House Bank! House Bank! Oops.</p> <p><b>TSONGAS:</b> I'm outta here.</p>  <p><b>BROWN:</b> California, Here I Come.</p>  | <p><b>BUSH:</b> Aren't I Presidential. Ignores Buchanan, easily sustains veto of Democratic tax package.</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> Vote for me if you want fundamental change.</p> <p><b>BROWN:</b> Not!</p>  | <p><b>BROWN:</b> If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere.</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> It's up to you, New York, New York.</p>   | <p><b>BROWN:</b> I have just begun to fight.</p>  <p><b>CLINTON:</b> I survived the New York media.</p>   |
| <p>The presence of three cabinet members on the list of House Bank offenders neutralizes this issue. Convincing wins in Michigan and Illinois make Clinton the presumptive nominee, though the <i>NYT</i>'s declaration that Brown, dubbed "Mr. Meanbeam" for his charge that Hillary Clinton's law firm got state business, "may need a miracle" to make it to California smacks of wishful thinking. Brownophobia also hits <i>Washington Post</i>, but best Brown put-down is in friendly <i>L.A. Weekly</i>: "A great guest star, but he'll never get his own series."</p> | <p>Brown's victory in Connecticut, the first head-to-head contest between the surviving Dems, drives the editorial pages to new heights of depreciation. <i>Time</i> simply ignores him, putting Clinton and Tsongas on the cover.</p>                                   | <p>Clinton is endorsed by <i>The New York Times</i>, the <i>Post</i>, the <i>Daily News</i>. <i>New York Newsday</i> picks Tsongas. <i>Rolling Stone</i> and <i>The Village Voice</i> back Brown. <i>L.A. Times</i> runs front-page story showing Clinton, contrary to his previous accounts, had received an induction notice when he joined ROTC.</p>  | <p>Despite the sound and fury, only 7% of eligible voters bother to turn out.</p>   |
| <p>Here the Brown jury is still out. His policy proposals get the usual slams, but his white-hot TV persona is a lot more fun to watch than Paul Tsongas swimming laps. Film of Clinton zooming over links at all-white country club hurts up north, may help with Bubba. Aside from a brief reference to a Bush ad pointing out that Pat Buchanan's wheels are Made in Germany, the GOP race disappears from the tube.</p>   | <p>The road to New York is the political story of the week, but when Perot appears on <i>60 Minutes</i> his Dallas phone bank logs 41,000 calls. WCBS-TV's Marcia Kramer corners Clinton, who finally admits he tried pot, but "I didn't like it and didn't inhale."</p> | <p>Donahue tries to put Clinton in a corner on the Big "A" question, but his audience wants to hear about the economy (see "Discourse," page 34). Looks like the Gennifer Flowers story is losing its legs.</p> <p><b>SAFIRE WATCH:</b> "President Bush and his likely Democratic challenger went back-to-back on CNN yesterday, and Gov. Bill Clinton came out standing a little taller."</p> | <p>Day before NY primary sees Brown and Clinton mano a mano on <i>Donahue</i>. The show's no-moderator, no ground-rules format is breakthrough TV, but Brown's third-place finish (well behind non-candidate Tsongas) puts his campaign on the critical list. Then ABC's John McWethy shoots the wounded with a two-parter charging Brown let his house be used for pot and coke parties. Story, based entirely on anonymous sources, gets massive pickup and then disappears from view...as does its target.</p> |

MESSAGE OF THE WEEK

PRINT/EDITORIAL

TELEVISION

ALL PHOTOS: AP/WIDE WORLD

# Tracking the Campaign

L.A. EXPLODES, PA. SENDS MALE POLS A MESSAGE...QUAYLE SENDS SINGLE MOTHERS A MESSAGE...PEROT SENDS GAYS A...

MESSAGE OF THE WEEK

PRINT/EDITORIAL

TELEVISION

2

APRIL 13-19

**BUSH** tosses his business base some red meat with an executive order that will hamper unions' ability to raise PAC money. He also proposes a Clinton-esque job-training bill.



APRIL 20-26

**CLINTON** calls Bush soft on crime. A Bush adviser says Clinton's record on the environment "is the worst in the nation." The campaign begins in earnest — and on a negative note.

APRIL 27-MAY 3

**REAL WORLD:** L.A. in flames  
**BUSH** tries to address the vision thing...



MAY 4-10

**BUSH:** Cities need "radical change" but no new federal \$\$.  
**PEROT:** Read my lips: No more interviews (until I buy some ideas). See you in 60 days!



AFL-CIO leadership endorses Clinton. *Washington Post* reporter Ann Devroy notes that both Bush initiatives are really just repackaged goods.

None of the candidates wants to talk about it, but with Pennsylvania's restrictive abortion law before the Supreme Court and Operation Rescue wild in the streets of Buffalo, sexual politics gains a new sense of urgency. *L.A. Times* writers Murray Waas and Doug Frantz charge "Bush's fingerprints are all over" policy to boost Saddam Hussein.

...but *NYT*'s Andrew Rosenthal describes the president's deregulation speech as "a sparsely attended event in the Rose Garden in which Mr. Bush talked about the dangers of step stools."

*Newsweek* says Bush's "cautious, rear-covering approach got him in and out of L.A. alive. But it wasn't boffo." *U.S. News* wakes up a sleeper issue with cover: "Iraqgate — How the Bush administration helped Saddam Hussein buy his weapons of war and why American taxpayers got stuck with the bill."

Clinton's response to Bush's job speech — "His proposal has been at the core of my campaign since the day I announced. They say I'm slick" — makes all three evening news shows. And the one — count 'em — one minute of coverage devoted to the upcoming Pennsylvania primary marks the end of Brown as even a minor annoyance.

CBS leads with a Texas A&M poll showing non-candidate Perot 5 points ahead in Bush's native state.

TV discovers the cities

**SAFIRE WATCH:** Suggests Clinton point out Iraqi nuclear threat "was in effect financed by Bush blindness and appeasement."

L.A. spotlights are on Bush, who gets 13 network stories versus 3 on Perot and only 1 about Clinton's visit. But reports like Rebecca Chase's examination of the Reagan-Bush abandonment of the cities are hardly what the pollster ordered. ABC's Jim Wooten says Perot used threats of sexual blackmail against a Texas newspaper reporter.

Doonesbury



BY GARRY TRUDEAU

**ALTERNATIVE SOURCES:** "I'm going to rebuild every building, state-of-the-art technology, put computers into every one of them, train the Crips, train the Bloods to operate the computers" — Dana Carvey as Ross Perot in L.A.



CLINTON LETS JESSE SEND HIS MESSAGE.....QUAYLE TRIPS OVER A TUBER.....PEROT PEAKS.....SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS

| MAY 11-17  | MAY 18-24   | MAY 25-31   | JUNE 1-7   |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p><b>BUSH</b> makes 5 inner-city visits in 8 days.</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> I am the real education candidate.</p> <p><b>PEROT</b> turns in 90 file boxes of signed petitions for Texas ballot.</p>   | <p><b>QUAYLE:</b> "It doesn't help matters when prime-time TV has Murphy Brown ...mocking the importance of fathers, by bearing a child alone and calling it just another 'lifestyle choice.'"</p> <p><b>PEROT:</b> I'm baaack! Voters don't care about issues, just "principles." Declares two-month search for ideas is over, after just three weeks.</p>  | <p><b>PEROT:</b> "What happens on TV is what really impacts on people. I think you could print any story you want on the front page of <i>The New York Times</i> and there's no reaction."</p>  | <p><b>BUSH:</b> Prosperity is just around the corner.</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> I said "S-A-X maniac."</p>  <p><b>PEROT:</b> Hiring Hamilton Jordan and Ed Rollins means I'm serious, not slick.</p>   |
| <p>Bush overrides EPA to water down Clean Air Act, vetoes campaign finance reform bill. In Anacostia, a poor D.C. neighborhood, Bush's demonstration of fishing technique flops when he can't cast his line into the water.</p>  | <p>NY tabs go boffo over <i>Murphy Brown</i>. RNC turns down gay rights groups' request to testify at platform hearings. <i>Boston Globe</i> says Bush "will likely post the worst economic record of any administration since WWII," including record lows in job growth and personal income, and biggest increase in national debt since Truman.</p>  | <p><i>Times</i> reporter Michael Kelly takes Perot up on his dare with a fair but ultimately devastating profile featuring allegations of intimidation and blackmail. <i>L.A. Times</i> quotes Kevin Phillips: "...there haven't been that many thin-skinned, short guys running on anti-adultery platforms elected president."</p>   | <p>"Surprise jump in jobless rate a blow to Bush" (<i>Chicago Tribune</i>). "Gloomy May figures rebut Bush's claim of solid recovery" (<i>Miami Herald</i>). Tom Wicker calls Clinton's <i>Arsenio</i> gig "undignified," frowns on "association with jazz music...dark shades." Famous last words: Bush spokesperson Torie Clarke says Buchanan will have to "grovel on broken glass with his mouth open" to speak at GOP convention.</p> |
| <p>Clinton's education speech gets high marks from NBC and ABC; CBS plays hookey. Only NBC's Andrea Mitchell notices Bush's campaign-reform veto. But the big news is Perot, who leads 33% to 28% for Bush and 24% for Clinton in <i>Time/CNN</i> poll.</p> <p><b>SAFIRE WATCH:</b> "There will be no dump-Quayle movement in ... Houston. That is because the weak end of the Bush-Quayle team is Mr. Bush...."</p> | <p><b>SAFIRE WATCH:</b> Charges Bush with "fraudulent use of public funds...sustained deception of Congress, and...obstruction of justice" re: tilt to Iraq. "In the face of Serbia's bloody invasion of its neighbors, President Bush has ducked under his desk...."</p>   | <p>Perot tells Barbara Walters he would not appoint a homosexual to his cabinet: "I don't want anybody there that will be a point of controversy with the American people." Talking heads in throes of Twelfth Amendment (House elects prez) fever. On-air mentions of Perot nearly 2-to-1 positive (64%) compared to Clinton (59%, but he's never on the air) and Bush (84% negative, his lowest ever).</p> <p><b>ALTERNATIVE SOURCES:</b> Jay Leno: "For those of you unfamiliar with the obscure third-party candidate,...it's pronounced Clin-ton."</p> | <p>All 3 networks pass on Bush's press conference pushing a Balanced Budget Amendment. Clinton clinches nomination, jams on <i>Arsenio</i>, but once again Perot calls media tune.</p> <p><b>SAFIRE WATCH:</b> Language column on "everlasting -gate combining form," incidentally reviews entire history of Iraqgate scandal.</p>                    |

PHOTO CREDITS: BUSH, PEROT, CLINTON, SAFIRE, AP/WIDE WORLD; L.A. FIRE, LARA REGAN/SABA; DANA CARVEY, NBC; MURPHY BROWN, CARTWRIGHT/CBS DOONESBURY, COPYRIGHT 1992 G.B. TRUDEAU. REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION OF UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

# Tracking the Campaign

PA. ABORTION RESTRICTIONS AND ROE V. WADE.....PROSPERITY IN OUR TIME SEZ PREZ IN MUNICH.....EXIT PEROT (NOT!).....

| JUNE 8—JUNE 14   | JUNE 15—JUNE 21  | JUNE 22—JUNE 28   | JUNE 29—JULY 5   |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p><b>BUSH:</b> Liberator of Panama; no excuses in Rio.</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> Nobody's going to Willie Horton me.</p>   | <p><b>BUSH:</b> Signs arms pact with Yeltsin.</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> I'm no pander bear.</p>   | <p><b>BUSH:</b> "Leave my kids alone."</p> <p><b>PEROT:</b> I didn't do it; it's "Mickey Mouse tossed salad" and GOP dirty tricks.</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> A man, a plan. Who said anything about a "middle-class tax cut"?</p>  | <p><b>BUSH:</b> "Endless polls, weird talk shows, crazy groups every Sunday telling you what you think...when the economy grew...in the first quarter."</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> Touching base with his base, meets with Congressional Black Caucus, Jewish leaders, pro-choice groups, and labor — all in one day.</p>  |
| <p>Bush surrogates unleashed. Charles Black labels Perot "liberal," RNC chair Rich Bond tries "authoritarian," but Quayle's "temperamental tycoon who has contempt for the Constitution" is the phrase that sticks. Cox News reports Perot hired private eye to dig dirt on ex-Pentagon staffer Richard Armitage. <i>The New Republic</i>, in a rare moment of agreement with <i>Nation</i> columnist Alexander Cockburn (who got there first), calls Perot a fascist.</p> |  <p>Perot: <i>Washington Post</i> (probably spurred by White House sources) reveals Perot secretly gave the paper information aimed at damaging Bush in 1988. <i>Time's</i> "Doubts about Perot" roundup also spins down. But he still does better than Bush in <i>echt</i>-Republican Orange County. <i>Washington Times</i> says Clinton "took a barefoot walk onto the hot coals with his criticism of Sister Souljah.... It was a journey that had to be made." <i>Spy's</i> Bush-whacking "He Cheats on His Wife" cover hits the stands (see "Jennifer," page 36).</p> | <p>Bloom is definitely off the Ross, as press hits his character and competence. AUDITS OF FEDERAL CONTRACTS INDICATE MAJOR FAILURES BY PEROT COMPANIES, sez <i>NYT</i>. Not even Perot could buy the kind of rave the paper's editorial page gives Clinton's economic plan, which stresses infrastructure spending over deficit reduction, shrinks tax cut to spare change: "It gives a sound answer to every important question." Only <i>NY Post's</i> Deborah Orin notices that latest CBS/<i>NYT</i> poll shows Jesse Jackson (25% favorable) way more popular than Clinton (16%).</p> | <p>L.A. <i>Times</i> says Clinton told Jews his pastor warned "God will never forgive you if you let Israel down." But David Broder says Clinton wasn't really pandering since he didn't shift "major policy positions to woo support."</p>  |
| <p>Bush's image gets gas pains in Panama; Rio coverage is worse. Clinton's attack on Sister Souljah, on Jesse Jackson's home turf, sends his Conventional Wisdom stock soaring. Most reporters follow Profile in Courage script, and Jackson's react only makes Clinton look ballsier.</p>   | <p>Clinton's speech telling state and local workers he favors cutting 100,000 <i>federal</i> jobs gets yawns in print but scores big on tube. "Once again," enthuses Jennings, Clinton told "his audience some of the facts of life they may not want to hear." NBC picks up Perot truth-stretcher theme. Quayle spells relief N-E-T-W-O-R-K, since none of them show his potato gaffe on the evening news.</p>  | <p>CBS spends five nights up close and personal with Perot, and it isn't pretty. "Perot has a penchant for military solutions, covert operations, and intimidation," says Eric Engberg.</p>   | <p>Supreme Court sends mixed message on abortion. CBS <i>This Morning</i> airs Rose Garden press conference with tourists playing reporter. Bush's luck runs out on Thursday, when unemployment hits an eight-year high. Perot shorts Citibank on ABC; stock rises anyway, which is more than can be said for the bantam billionaire after Peter Jennings's hour-long profile.</p> |



**SAFIRE WATCH:**  
Cites 10/13/89 State Dept. memo proving Bush and Baker knew U.S. grain credits to Iraq were diverted to buy nuclear weapons.

**SAFIRE WATCH:** "Bush should stop pretending he and Baker were out of the loop [on selling nuclear technology to Iraq and] come clean."

CLINTON/GORE GET HOT.....BOSNIAN HORRORS GOAD BUSH INTO ACTION.....N.Y. TIMES CANCELS AUGUST SURPRISE.....

| JULY 6-12  | JULY 13-19   | JULY 20-26   | JULY 27-AUGUST 2   |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p><b>BUSH:</b> Wish you were here (Munich). Not!</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> The torch has been passed.</p> <p><b>PEROT:</b> Why, "your people" are some of my best friends...</p>    | <p><b>BUSH:</b> Gone Fishin' (for Perot voters).</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> "We have got to go beyond the brain-dead politics in Washington, and give our people the kind of government they deserve."</p> <p><b>PEROT:</b> I believe I'll fold.</p>   | <p><b>BUSH:</b> Read My Lips: No New V.P., backed with High Noon at the Iraqi Agriculture Ministry.</p>   | <p><b>BUSH:</b> "...the experience, the seasoning, the guts to do the right thing."</p> <p><b>GORE:</b> If Bush and Quayle "are such whizzers in foreign policy, why is Saddam Hussein still thumbing his nose at the entire world?"</p>    |
| <p><i>NY Times</i> editorial on Gore: A TORCH PASSES IN LITTLE ROCK; page 1 head on Gore profile: A MAN WHO WAS RAISED TO BE THE PRESIDENT; <i>L.A. Times</i> on Munich: BUSH WILL BE RETURNING HOME WITH LITTLE FROM THE G-7 SUMMIT. Meanwhile...newly released "internal Bush administration documents" show senior White House involvement in keeping Congress out of Iraqgate loop, says <i>L.A. Times</i>.</p> <p><b>SAFIRE WATCH:</b> Compares Bush counsel Boyden Gray to Sherman Adams: says Gray's actions "fit into a pattern of obstruction of justice and lying to Congress we call Iraqgate."</p> | <p><i>Newsweek</i> on Clinton/Gore: "The Front Runners." Convention bounce makes prints wild about Bill Monroe, Louisiana, <i>News-Star</i>; H. ROSS PEROT: THE QUITTER. <i>NY Post</i>: WHAT A WIMP. Philadelphia <i>Daily News</i> runs pic of ex-Perot-nistas hanging him in effigy, with sign, "You left us hanging."</p>  | <p>Clinton's 29-point lead in ABC/<i>Washington Post</i> poll is biggest post-convention bounce ever recorded. Dynamic duo draws "October-sized crowds and attention in the middle of a summer weekend," raves <i>Seattle Post-Intelligencer</i>, but <i>NY Newsday</i>'s Tim Clifford notes bus-tour focus on "middle- or working-class whites," even in urban center stops. DAN QUAYLE SHOULD GO — <i>Chicago Tribune</i> editorial.</p> | <p>Foreign Policy Week. Round 1, Bosnia, goes to Clinton, who positions himself as potentially more aggressive than Bush. <i>W. Post</i> quotes ex-Reagan adviser Patrick Glynn: Clinton "has been a better reflector of neo-conservative thinking on foreign policy than Bush." In Round 2, Iraq, GOP attack machine begins to bite as Clinton tries to make hay from slumping economy and is instead forced to answer charges he straddled Persian Gulf war.</p>  |
| <p>ABC's John McWethy quotes House banking chair Henry Gonzalez charging Bush knew that U.S.-backed loans to Iraq were used to buy "nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons."</p> <p><b>ALTERNATIVE SOURCES:</b> "Personally, Mr. Perot...I wasn't offended, you no-platform-having, inch-high private eye...gay-bashing, flip-flopping, got-a-million-dollars-in-the-bank-and-still-go-to-Super-Cuts-to-show-off-them-big-Dumbo-ears.... I wasn't offended at all." — Arsenio Hall</p>  | <p>Perot's "tycoon-like decision to cut his losses" (CBS) gets nearly half as much air time (50 minutes) as the whole convention (103). Pundits rush to declare advantage Bush: "I don't see any way in the world you can portray this as anything other than bad news for Clinton," says UVA's Larry Sabato. But Bill and Al's Excellent Bus Tour gets TV that would make Michael Deaver green with envy.</p> | <p>Bill and Al's road show, now in second smash week, still leads evening newscasts. Quayle tells CNN's <i>Larry King</i> he would support his daughter "on whatever decision she made" if she ever had an abortion. Bush keeps cool re Saddam; loses cool, shouting "Shut up and sit down" at POW/MIA families.</p>   | <p>"This whole situation raises the question, why is Saddam Hussein still in power?" — ABC's Hal Bruno. Conservative fundraiser Richard Viguerie and columnist George Will both call for Bush to withdraw. Instead, president's men (and Mary Matalin) unveil fall strategy: daily fax attacks and liberal servings of pork (TX supercollider now, F-16s later).</p>   |

MESSAGE OF THE WEEK

PRINT/EDITORIAL

TELEVISION

# Tracking the Campaign

BUSH BOUNCES ANYWAY.....HURRICANE JENNIFER MERE SQUALL.....HURRICANE ANDREW BLOWS PREZ OFF COURSE.....

MESSAGE OF THE WEEK

PRINT/EDITORIAL

TELEVISION

**AUGUST 3—AUGUST 9**   **AUGUST 10—AUGUST 16**   **AUGUST 17—AUGUST 23**   **AUGUST 24—30**

**BUSH:** Clinton's health plan combines "the efficiency of the House Post Office and the compassion on the KGB."

**CLINTON:** He's a wimp, and Serbia is the proof.

WHAT MESSAGE?

**BUSH:** We are Family.

**CLINTON:** "You'd think George Bush was running for First Lady."

**BUSH:** Clinton raised taxes and fees in Arkansas 128 times.

**CLINTON:** Delays in storm relief need looking into.

Bush backs force to safeguard aid to Bosnia, but Clinton gets the credit. *Village Voice* prints 10-page anatomy of Iraqgate. GOP attacks get two-fer coverage: first, the charges, then disavowals of harsher charges, like Mary Matalin's "bimbo eruptions" memo, a vivid demonstration of why negative campaigning is here to stay.

*NY Post:* BUSH HAD SWISS TRYST (see "Jennifer," page 36). Runup to GOP convention puts hard-right platform victories on abortion, homosexuality in spotlight, followed by B. Bush's softer spinning. *NYT* reporter Patrick Tyler's 8/16 front-pager on administration decision to bomb Baghdad in order "to give President Bush a boost" during the convention gets less attention than Bush mistress story, but still forces cancellation of Baghdad raid.

"George Bush didn't level with the electorate he asked so earnestly to trust him in his acceptance speech Thursday night — not close," says *W. Post* editorial, but paper's news pages oblige White House by pissing on last week's *NYT* Iraq revelations.

BUSH'S GAINS FROM CONVENTION NEARLY EVAPORATE IN LATEST POLL — *NYT*, *Time* sends Clinton-Gore a big wet kiss, asks (breathlessly), "What is the secret of Bill and Al's excellent synergy?" *Rolling Stone* endorses Clinton, says his election "will give our generation the chance to renew our politics."

Bus Trip II still drives local media wild — Iowa's *Quad City Times* banners HELLO BILL across page one — but the networks have had enough. NBC sends Lisa Myers to a bowling alley off the Jersey Turnpike to meet "potential kingmakers of presidential politics" — a.k.a. Reagan Democrats.

**REAL WORLD:** Detention camps in Bosnia



Morning shows all follow *Post* lead, but prez won't play. Bush tells NBC's Stone Phillips that in the end, the decision on abortion must be up to the woman (as long as she's his granddaughter): "Well, whose else's could it be?"

**SAFIRE WATCH:** "Right-wingers like me — domestic libertarians, global interventionists, neocons, lifelong freedom-mongers in the habit of loyalty pulling down the lever under the Republican eagle — need strong reasons to stick with the national ticket this year."

Barbara Bush and Ronald Reagan get good reviews, but the GOP's culture clash was not quite ready for prime time. Acceptance speech, though not exactly a rival to *The Sermon on the Mount*, does its job. Bush gets his bounce, but Pat Buchanan gets the sound-bite.

**REAL WORLD ??:** Woody Allen/Mia Farrow in *Splitsville*



Hurricane Andrew blows the campaign off the tube — at least until the end of the week, when Floridians angry about langard federal relief begin blaming Bush on TV.

**SAFIRE WATCH:** "Former Republican speechwriter ... still wishes he could be more of a Bush supporter."

U.S. BUSINESSES LOSE 167,000 JOBS.....BUSH DUCKS FIRST DEBATES.....PEROT REDUX, REBOUNDS AFTER FIRST DEBATE.....

| AUGUST 31—SEPTEMBER 6  | SEPTEMBER 7—13  | SEPTEMBER 14—20   | SEPTEMBER 21—27  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p><b>BUSH:</b> "Truman was a man of decisiveness, not equivocation. He'd find little in common with Governor Clinton."</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> "Bush cast his first vote against Harry Truman and he has spent four years fighting against everything Harry Truman fought for."</p>   | <p><b>BUSH:</b> "I'm not going to do it again — never, ever."</p>  <p><b>CLINTON:</b> Family Values 'R Us.</p>   | <p><b>BUSH:</b> Clinton's an Oxford-trained, Moscow-style "social engineer."</p> <p><b>CLINTON:</b> "If George Bush doesn't understand the problem [the economy], how can he solve it?"</p>   | <p><b>BUSH:</b> Failed governor, small state. Draft-dodger.</p>  <p><b>CLINTON:</b> Failed president. Liar.</p>  |
| <p>167,000 JOBS LOST BY U.S. BUSINESSES...SETBACK FOR BUSH — <i>NYT</i>, p.1. <i>Arkansas Democrat-Gazette's</i> revelation that Clinton knew about efforts to get him a Naval Reserve slot gets national pickup, sends Clinton's <i>Newsweek</i> CW arrow south: "Thanks for saving me from the draft, Uncle Ray. But I'm paying for it now."</p>   | <p>Bush signs North American Free Trade Agreement, which Labor Sec'y Martin admits could cost 150,000 jobs (see "Trade," page 38). Print depicts Bush's economic agenda as "packaged familiar proposals" (<i>Newsday</i>), or "repackaged" (<i>W. Post</i>), which "offered no new plans or short term solutions." (<i>L.A. Times</i>). <i>WSJ</i> looks for Reds in Clinton's camp.</p>  | <p><i>Business Week</i> reports "Clinton may muster more business endorsements than any other Democrat since LBJ. Dueling draft-dodgers (see "Draft," page 42): <i>NYT</i> follows report Clinton asked Senator Fulbright's help to avoid draft with lengthy examination showing "striking pattern of favoritism" in Quayle's Guard berth. AP story on VFW's non-endorsement suggests so far draft issue is a wash.</p> | <p><b>SAFIRE WATCH:</b> "I believe a grand jury will be empaneled next year to probe James Baker's backdoor financing of Saddam Hussein's war machine." A memo to prosecutors follows.</p> <p><b>ALTERNATIVE SOURCES:</b> Bush takes up draft cudgel himself on Rush Limbaugh's talk show.</p>   |
| <p>CBS's Susan Spencer slams Bush's health care rhetoric: "In fact, the president said virtually nothing about it until this year. He may have a tough time hijacking health care reform" from the Democrats. Clinton gets booed at Southern 500, but ABC gives him credit for just showing up.</p> <p><b>SAFIRE WATCH:</b> "In rejecting the House Judiciary Committee call for a [special] prosecutor...to investigate the crimes of Iraqgate, [Attorney General William Barr] has taken personal charge of the cover-up."</p> | <p>Video is kinder to prez. Detroit speech, reinforced by a paid ad, sets the stage for Clinton tax attacks on all 3 networks the morning after — the first sign that Spin-meister Baker is back at the controls. "Bill Clinton wants to raise income tax rates, put a surtax on, put a payroll tax on," warns Jack Kemp on <i>Good Morning America</i>, while Charles Black tells <i>Today</i> viewers Clinton's "for more taxes, more spending, against a balanced budget and for bigger deficits." Biggest truth-stretcher is Treasury Secretary Brady on <i>CBS This Morning</i>: "Governor Clinton...quite blatantly tells you in his 22-page document, 'I'm going to raise your taxes. I'm going to spend more.'"</p> <p><b>REAL WORLD:</b> House passes Family Leave Bill.</p> | <p>Clinton fires first in TV attack ad war. <i>60 Minutes</i> interviews Iraqgate financier Christopher Drogoul. Perot (remember him?) teases <i>Today</i> viewers.</p> <p><b>SAFIRE WATCH:</b> "Votes in Texas outweighed America's word in the world, and Mr. Bush found some phony excuse" to sell F-16s to Taiwan.</p>           | <p>Season premiere of <i>Murphy Brown</i> is most-viewed event of campaign so far. CBS says show, which closes with a huge pile of potatoes [sic] dumped outside Veep's residence, is seen by 70 million people. Perot continues Cuomo-esque media tease, says re-entry is "up to the volunteers" — but Perot gets his volunteers the old-fashioned way, by paying their salaries. (Will soon heed "their" call to reenter.)</p> |

# DISCOURSE

By Jay Rosen

Political philosopher Michael Sandel has written that "when politics goes well, we can know a good in common that we cannot know alone." In my own thinking about the press and politics, I have returned to Sandel's notion again and again, for it seems to me an ideal description of what journalists should commit themselves to — not the liberal agenda or the conservative cause, but a certain kind of discourse that permits the political community to understand itself in a better, fuller way. Journalists should try to make politics "go well," so that it actually becomes a discussion in which the polity learns more about itself, its current problems, its real divisions, its place in time, its prospects for the future. By their commitment to such a discussion, journalists might reclaim some of their lost authority in the American public sphere.

In January 1990, *Washington Post* political correspondent David Broder suggested various ways of improving political discourse and the climate of public debate. In one article, for example, he urged his colleagues to take the campaign agenda away from the consultants and handlers, who are interested only in the hot-button themes that might win the election. Reporters should uncover a "voters' agenda" by inter-

viewing average citizens about what really concerns them. At news conferences and in its election-year coverage, the press should push the voters' agenda in an effort to change the content of the campaign.

Journalists, Broder writes, "need to become partisan — not on behalf of a candidate or a party — but on behalf of the process." The opponents, in his view, are the campaign consultants and handlers (and the candidates under their influence) who define politics as nothing more than the process of winning elections.

Even to propose such an agenda goes against the temperament of most journalists, who pride themselves on maintaining an oppositional stance, especially in relation to office-seekers and office-holders. "Toughness" sometimes seems to be an end in itself, to be pursued regardless of consequences. Lacking any positive mission or approved agenda, journalists seek an agreed-upon target for the mutual exhibition of their toughness. The sort of feeding frenzy that takes place during every presidential campaign is like a hazing ritual that helps those who do the hazing know who they are. They're the press because they demand honest answers to difficult questions, generally defined as those that threaten to cause the candidate the most damage.

The journalist's urge — or is it a need? — to wound and humiliate has been ably documented by Larry Sabato, but its dangers have not been fully appreciated. Over time, the feeding frenzy and the unquestioned ethic of toughness may actually wear away at



the spot that attaches the First Amendment to the profession of journalism. A fine illustration was provided by one of the most interesting moments of the campaign season — Bill Clinton's April 1 appearance on the *Donahue* show.

Clinton agreed to appear on *Donahue* during the height of the hazing the Democratic candidates endured in New York. He probably did not expect what his host had prepared for him — thirty minutes of questions about an alleged affair with Gennifer Flowers, and other assorted inquiries into his "character." Clinton tried to resist. He told *Donahue* that such tactics were "debasement of our politics." He said, "You are responsible for the cynicism in this country. You don't want to talk about the real issues." But *Donahue* persisted, demanding to know if Clinton was denying the allegations or merely contesting *Donahue*'s right to ask about them. This brought groans from the audience and cries of "Oh, come on! Get off it! Enough!"

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his alleged infidelity, Donahue was not in fact representing the interests of his audience, which lay elsewhere. What he did represent — and represent well — was the cult of toughness in professional journalism, the journalist's belief in a "God-given right to spend two weeks torturing

**CAMPAGN  
ALBUM: Clinton and  
sax on Arsenio**

ing the candidates," as Gail Collins of *Newsday* put it a few days earlier, referring to the weeks leading up to the New York primary.

To return to the show, as the audience applauded the young woman's attack on the talk show host, Clinton broke into a confident smile, while Donahue, somewhat taken back, stood alone, isolated within a studio normally under his firm control. We might also say that journalism stood alone. For here was an instance when the journalist's sacred battle cry, the "public's right to know," became the public's battle cry *against* the journalist. By refusing to question Clinton about the public's true business — "Medicare, education, everything else" — Donahue had unwittingly forfeited the First Amendment authority journalists believe is theirs for life.

Although it is not often emphasized, there is a tradition of thinking about the free press clause that puts primary emphasis, not on the rights of the press, but on the citizen's right to adequate information and vigorous public debate. In certain contexts this right may be upheld against the managers of the media and their desire to do as they please. (The primary text for this interpretation is the Supreme Court's decision in *Red Lion Broadcasting Co. v. FCC*, which upheld the government's right to regulate broadcasters.)

What transpired in Donahue's studio was a sudden shift in this direction: rather than Donahue representing the audience's interests to Clinton, it became the audience representing its own interest to Donahue, with Clinton, a potential chief executive of the state, as the beneficiary. Behind his smile, Clinton may have sensed the power of this moment, when the moral and political authority in "the public's right to know" slid over to him as a candidate for public office. ♦

Donahue did move on — to Clinton's marijuana use and his marital difficulties.

When the show returned from a commercial break, Donahue ventured into the studio audience for questions. The first questioner was twenty-five-year-old Melissa Roth, who later said she was a Republican. Her remarks were delivered with intensity and aimed at Donahue:

I think really, given the pathetic state of most of the United States at this point — Medicare, education, everything else — I can't believe you spent half an hour of air time attacking this man's character. I'm not even a Bill Clinton supporter, but I think this is ridiculous.

This brought cheers and applause from the audience, most of whom appeared to share her frustration.

Several things are worth noting about this episode. First, while Donahue is generally considered a TV personality rather than a journalist, in this case he

was doing exactly what many journalists would do. He was pressing Clinton for answers about the "character" issues that were then dominating press coverage of the campaign. He was refusing to allow the candidate's denials to pass without aggressive follow-ups. He was exhibiting his toughness by probing the areas he knew Clinton wanted to avoid. In short, he was behaving exactly as Lesley Stahl or Sam Donaldson might behave. Thus, even though a "real" journalist was lacking, the audience's reaction to Donahue can be interpreted as a reaction against the journalist's mindset in these situations.

Second, critics and journalists have grown accustomed to "explaining" the excesses of the media by reference to the audience's alleged appetite for gossip and entertainment. The encounter on Donahue's show confounded this explanation, for it was Donahue alone who appeared to display the appetite for digging into the candidate's private life. In pressuring Clinton to come clean about

## CAMPAIN ISSUES

# JENNIFER

By Jon Swan

If the Bush-alleged-philandering story had nothing else, it certainly had legs. As Joe Conason wrote in the cover story of the July/August *Spy* magazine: "Whispers about the president's extramarital dalliances, real and merely alleged, date back at least as far as his first campaign for the presidency, in 1980." Whispers turned to print in 1988, less than a month before the presidential election, when an aide to Michael Dukakis resigned "after calling on Bush to 'fess up' about whether he had carried on an extramarital relationship," in the words of a page-one October 21 *Boston Globe* account.

At about the same time, *L.A. Weekly* ran a piece titled "The Mistress Question." The article, by Richard Ryan, asserted that "two impeccable sources are offering much harder information" about what had previously been "common gossip" in Washington circles — namely, "Bush's long-running affair with his appointments secretary, Jennifer Fitzgerald." Both sources — "people of stature in their respective fields" — insisted on anonymity. The piece ended with paired quotes. Asked why he had never assigned a reporter to look into Bush's private life, Evan Thomas, *Newsweek*'s Washington bureau chief, replied, "Newsweek has no desire to break a story on the topic." William Greider of *Rolling Stone*, for his part, said he'd heard "a lot of gossip over the years" and had asked journalists, "Why aren't you covering this? Why aren't you publishing this?"

One answer was provided this summer by *Washington Post* media writer Howard Kurtz, who pointed out that

"several news organizations, including *The Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times*, have investigated the rumor but found no evidence to substantiate it." Evan Thomas, again sought out for comment, supplied another reason. "It's very hard to look into the story," he told Joe Conason. "How do you do it without someone stepping forward like Jennifer Flowers?"

How? Well, Conason found a way, a sly *Spy* way — by putting together a lot of detailed circumstantial evidence, including intriguing quotes from a "Ms. X, a former journalist ... who apparently had an affair with Bush while he was running for president in 1980." Stories built on anonymous sources may firm up conviction among the convinced, but on undecideds that judicious adverb "apparently" can have a deflating effect.

So here was *Spy* with a boldly billed cover story ("He Cheats On His Wife") written by a respected journalist (Conason was named executive editor of *The New York Observer* in mid-August), and now the question was: There it is — again — that story with those really great legs. Anyone going to admit to having *looked*?

The *Chicago Tribune* found a way of looking without seeming to stare. In a June 21 "Media Watch" column (SEEKING A MIDDLE GROUND: SPY MAGAZINE'S BUSH-WHACKING PART OF A BROADER EFFORT TO SURVIVE), James Warren used Conason's article as "a window on a magazine" trying to expand beyond New York. First, though, he summarized its findings, along the way introducing details that lent weight to Conason's reporting. Among other papers that took note of *Spy*'s revelations were the *New York Post*, *The New*

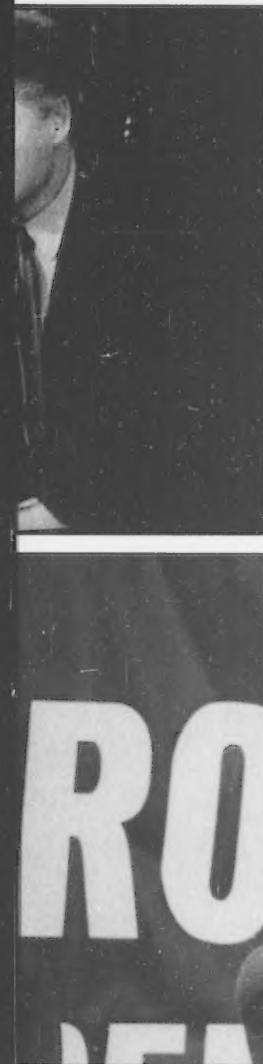


*York Observer*, the *Philadelphia Daily News*, the *Fort Wayne, Indiana, News-Sentinel*, and the *National Enquirer*. As for New York's Good Gray Lady of record, she prudently averted her eyes.

Even the *Times* was compelled to cast a sideways glance at the mistress story, however, when, on August 11, the *New York Post* yelled at the top of its tabloid lungs THE BUSH AFFAIR. Flanking the fat type were photos of Bush and Ms. Fitzgerald, whose resemblance to Mrs. Bush was almost eerie.

The *Post* "exclusive" was what might be called a blown-up footnote to a footnote, being based on a tidbit of research tucked into a footnote to a just-published book called *The Power-House*, by

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LIAISON

**CAMPAIGN ALBUM:** The Clintons explain on *60 Minutes*; the Bushes take a pre-dawn stroll; the Perots announce

Susan B. Trento. The book was about Washington lobbyist and p.r. executive Robert Gray, whom Trento describes as a participant in an effort to help cover up "Bush's sexual indiscretions ... if he ever hoped to be president." A footnote to this episode contained evidence suggesting that Louis Fields, an ambassador to the nuclear disarmament talks in Geneva, had arranged for Bush and Ms. Fitzgerald to share a guest house in Switzerland. In *Post*-ese: NEW BOOK: BUSH HAD SWISS TRYST. Picking up choice bits from the Trento footnote, the *Post* quoted Fields as saying, "It became clear to me that the vice-president and Ms. Fitzgerald were romantically involved ... It made me very

uncomfortable."

Now the entire multiheaded media monster swiveled, gawked, and ran stories about Bush's response, which among other things was to say, "It's a lie." BUSH ERUPTS! boasted the *Post*. Among the folks Bush erupted on were network correspondents who had the audacity to seek comment on an allegation heard round the world. "I'm not going to take any sleazy questions like that from CNN," Bush snapped at Mary Tillotson, who, Bush spokesman Marlin Fitzwater later said, "will never work around the White House again." Stone Phillips of NBC also took heat for venturing to ask Bush if he had ever had an affair. To ask such a question "in the

Oval Office" struck Bush as very bad manners.

While Bush was in an eruptive mode, Ms. Fitzgerald wasn't talking. That left former ambassador Fields, but he was dead. True, some of his comments about the alleged relationship had been taped, but *Newsweek* — which seemingly alone took the trouble to listen to the tape — found the comments ambiguous.

Thus, after a flashy two-day cancan staged by Alexander Hamilton's favorite tab, a curtain came down on the story. There was no denying that it had great legs, but it was hard not to notice that it lacked a journalistic essential — a visible, living, talking head. ♦

## CAMPAIGN ISSUES

# TRADE

By John Judis

For the last year, politicians and policy-makers have spent considerable time debating tariffs, quotas, managed trade, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and U.S.-Japan economic relations. The press, which formerly confined these issues to the business section, has begun to give them front-page billing. But greater attention has not led to greater clarity.

Last December, for instance, as the primary campaigns began, reporters described the issues surrounding Bush's trip to Japan as protectionism vs. free trade. On December 30, for example, Frank Murray of *The Washington Times* wrote that Bush went to Japan with "the sure knowledge that free trade vs. protectionism will be an emotional issue in Congress and the 1992 presidential election." The same day *The New York Times*'s Keith Bradsher, purporting to explain the debate over the president's trip, wrote that "fair trade has often been a euphemism in Washington for protectionism." The next day *Washington Post* reporter Paul Blustein reported that the Japanese wanted to weaken "the political momentum behind protectionist legislation in Congress."

Throughout the first months of the campaign, reporters for *USA Today*, the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Times*, and *The New York Times* continued to refer to politicians, policies, and legislation as "protectionist." *The New York Times* was a particularly frequent user of the

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term. On January 14, Richard Berke, analyzing the election debate, described Representative Richard Gephardt as having fought unsuccessfully in the 1988 election for "protectionist labor," an ambiguous but clearly derogatory term. On January 26, David Rosenbaum, in an article headed CANDIDATES PLAYING TO MOOD OF PROTECTIONISM, declared that "the protectionist movement has gained strength this election year."

By the spring, both the Democratic and Republican races were settled, but then billionaire Ross Perot hinted that he would run for president. In describing Perot's views on trade and his opposition to NAFTA, reporters once again used the term "protectionist." Again, *The New York Times* led the pack. On June 14, Steven Holmes wrote: "Mr. Perot denies he is a protectionist, but he often says that a tougher policy is needed in negotiations with American trading partners, especially Japan" — the astounding implication being that getting tough in negotiations is equivalent to protectionism. On June 27, Steven Greenhouse, citing Perot's opposition to NAFTA on the ground that it would entail "a massive loss of jobs to Mexico," wrote: "Viewing trade policy as a potent tool for strengthening industry, Mr. Perot sounds far more protectionist than Mr. Bush or Mr. Clinton."

Other publications followed suit. Richard Benedetto of *USA Today* reported on June 17 that Perot's supporters had a "strong protectionist and isolationist bent" because they "favor trade restrictions on Japan and reducing the U.S. [military] role...." On July 10, Tom Walker of *The Atlanta Journal* and *Constitution* reported without comment

or contradiction the opinion of the chief investment strategist at Salomon Brothers that Perot's policies could mean "a retreat to a 1930s style of protectionism."

What's wrong with all this?

Of course, a politician might be described as wanting to "protect" a particular industry, but this is not the same as saying that he or she embraces the ideology of protectionism. "Protectionist" and "protectionism" are terms that may have some utility in a polemic, but they should not be used in news stories without being surrounded by quotation marks and historical explanation. Calling current trade legislation "protectionist" is very similar to calling proposals for national health insurance "socialist."

The label came into vogue during the debate over trade that began after the Civil War and culminated in the infamous Smoot-Hawley tariff of 1930. During this time, self-avowed protectionists believed that the U.S. should concentrate its economic activities on this continent and keep out foreign imports. As historian Paul Wolman writes in *Most Favored Nation*, they believed that "the continental United States ... provided sufficient scope for the expansive energies of American capitalism." Protectionists, he adds, wanted uniformly high tariffs that would "act as a 'Chinese Wall' to bar European or other foreign goods that might supplant domestic products and discourage domestic development."

After World War I, protectionists were unwilling to recognize that the U.S. had become inextricably part of a global economy. During the first years of the depression they backed the Smoot-Hawley tariff, which, by erecting high tariffs against imports, helped set off an international trade war that deepened the world depression. The tariff's failure discredited protectionists and strengthened the trend toward reciprocal trade agreements and — after World War II — toward removing all trade barriers. For at least four decades politicians and policy intellectuals shunned both the name and ideology of protectionism.

That remains the case today. No major political figure — from Representative Gephardt to columnist

Pat Buchanan to Senator Tom Harkin — advocates systematic tariffs against all foreign imports or argues that American companies should devote themselves to their "home market." They understand that the U.S. is part of world capitalism. Some politicians do advocate tariffs and quotas, but as specific, temporary expedients to remedy disparities in American trade relations with particular countries. Critics have focused on Japan because they believe that Japan practices a form of economic mercantilism aimed at encouraging exports and discouraging imports. They criticize Japan because they believe it subverts the post-World War II ideal of an integrated world market.

Politicians' criticisms of the North American Free Trade Agreement are also based on assumptions very different from protectionism. NAFTA critics are not primarily concerned with Mexican firms importing cheap goods into the U.S., but with American firms moving their operations to Mexico so they can take advantage of low wages and lax environmental standards. The issue is capital mobility, not imports. And NAFTA's critics do not call for closing the border with Mexico. Rather, they want a more gradual transition to an integrated market.

Yet in spite of the difference between these positions and those of classic protectionism, the press has persisted, without any qualification, in labeling managed-trade proponents and NAFTA critics as "protectionist." The result is to stigmatize their positions by identifying them with the failures of the Smoot-Hawley tariff.

If reporters' use of "protectionist" reflects a lack of historical knowledge, their use of the term "Japan basher" reflects a naivete about how Washington lobbyists and public relations flacks shape policy debates. The label "Japan basher" first appeared in the early 1980s. Its inventor was Robert Angel, the former president of the Japan Economic Institute, a Washington institute financed and overseen by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Angel, who is now a political scientist at the University of South Carolina, wanted to counter the mounting public criticism of Japan's trade policies. "I

looked around for a phrase to use to discredit Japan's critics, and I hoped to be able to discredit those most effective critics by lumping them together with the people who weren't informed and who as critics were an embarrassment to everybody else," Angel says.

Angel's goal was to discredit opposition to Japan's trade practices by insinuating that it was based on racism and xenophobia. His model was the pro-Israel lobby's use of the term anti-Semitism to stigmatize opponents of Israel's policies. He first tried out the term "anti-Japanism" in speeches and interviews but it didn't stick. Then, inspired by the British term "Paki-bashing," he tried "Japan bashing" — and it worked. "The first people to pick up on it were the Japanese press," Angel says. "However, within a year the American press began to use the term." The term became a weapon in the public relations war being waged in Washington over trade policy and U.S.-Japanese economic relations.

Angel is now embarrassed by his triumph. "I view that modest public relations success with some shame and disappointment," he says. "Those people who use [the term] have the distinction of being my intellectual dupes."

Still, the term continues to be widely used — not only by the Japanese press and officials, but also by the American press. In the last year, columnists and editorial writers used it frequently against Japan's critics and against proponents of trade legislation. On January 6, for example, syndicated columnist Edwin Yoder described Republican presidential candidate Buchanan as having emerged "as an incipient trade protectionist and Japan basher." On February 7, *Washington Post* business columnist Hobart Rowen cited without comment Japanese opinion that on his trip to Tokyo "Bush succumbed to pressures of the Republican right from Pat Buchanan, and from the entire range of Democratic candidates, to bash Japan."

Reporters have also used the term uncritically. In a January 6 *Los Angeles Times* story, Donald Woutat described Representative John Dingell as a "reputed Japan basher." In the February 6 *New York Times*, R.W. Apple wrote that "the only foreign policy topic on which the Democratic candidates have spent

much time so far has been trade, especially trade with Japan. Some bash Japan and some don't."

On February 25, Tom Brown wrote in *The Seattle Times* that when "Senator Slade Gorton talks about the value of free trade, nobody in Japan listens because he is drowned out by Japan bashers in Congress." The next day, Judi Hasson wrote in *USA Today* that "the Japanese are paying closer attention to this year's U.S. presidential race because of increased 'Japan bashing' on the campaign trail."

One might argue that "protectionist" and "Japan basher" are just minor terms in a larger analysis of a politician or policy-maker's position. Unfortunately, that's not the case. In a scholarly treatise, in which terms are carefully explained, the whole can be greater than its parts, but in news articles and analyses, loaded terms with long histories or damaging connotations can obscure subtler distinctions.

That has been particularly true in the last year. As the debate over trade has moved onto the front pages, reporters with little expertise in international economics have used these terms as hooks on which they can hang what appear to be weighty analyses. In the process, they have misled both the public and themselves.

Undoubtedly, some reporters and editors have used these terms to slander politicians and to discredit positions they disagree with. But most of the press has probably not been guilty of overt bias. Rather, reporters and editorial writers have been left behind by historical changes that have undermined the way we have been accustomed to thinking about politics and economics. The debate over trade — like the debate over post-cold war foreign policy or government economic intervention — is largely without precedent. Not just economic terminology, but the major political terms of the last five decades — liberal, conservative, internationalist — have lost their clear application.

What should the press do? It should be extremely cautious about using political labels as objective descriptions. It should not try to reduce complex arguments to simple slogans. And it should acknowledge in its coverage that it is traveling on uncharted terrain. ♦

## CAMPAIN ISSUES

# WOMEN

By Jane O'Reilly

This year a handful of women won primary elections for United States Senate seats. Eleven, at final count. Even if they all won, and joined the two incumbents and newly appointed senatorial widow Mrs. Joselyn Burdick — a Democrat from North Dakota — that would be very, very slightly more than 10 percent of the entire Senate. Seventy-two years after women were allowed to vote, the great law of One Woman at a Time appears to have been broken. And lo! 1992 is declared The Year of the Woman! It is, in fact, almost always headlined as The Year of the Woman! singular, in a subliminal reminder that one is enough.

The baseline explanation for The Year of the Woman! was a combination of the response to *Thelma and Louise*, Susan Faludi's *Backlash*, the Clarence Thomas hearings, the congressional banking scandal, redistricting, and incumbency loss of heart. Synergy, if you will, but synergy propelled by a shift, an almost defiant hardening, in political women's confidence. It was as though we had reached the point where we felt we had nothing to lose.

Women are clearly not about to take over the country. But we do think we are capable of it, should try to do it. That women have (almost completely) outgrown our doubts about our place in politics is a story that sounds like baloney to a male editor. It is the kind of news you either get or you don't.

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It was this realization that moved about a hundred women writers, reporters, editors, designers, and political activists to publish *The Getting It Gazette* (get it?), a paper for the women delegates to the Democratic convention. It worked so well that we published in Houston, both for the Republican women shut out by their party and for the women gathered outside the convention. To paraphrase Marilyn Quayle, we unleashed our essential natures as women. As women journalists.

As we looked through what passed for coverage of The Year of the Woman!, we were struck first by the way the Democratic convention became an occasion for publishing cute group shots that made the candidates look like giggling sorority girls. Then we recognized the inevitable catfight theme implied in such absurd headlines as this one on a story about Hillary Clinton and Tipper Gore from *The Arizona Republic*: STRONG WOMEN PAIRED ON TICKET, BUT PERSONALITY CLASH TERMED UNLIKELY.

One positive insight gleaned from the clippings was that the predominance of women political reporters at *The New York Times* made a big difference. Anna Quindlen's heroic work has apparently resulted in a readiness at the *Times* to recognize, for example, that Catherine Manegold's piece on the radical feminist Women's Action Coalition (NO MORE NICE GIRLS) was a story on the shift in women's attitudes, not a story for the Living section. For the first time, the women editing *Getting It Gazette* occasionally felt we were living in the same country as the editors of the *Times*.

But most of the time we felt we were



covering totally different news — for example, the emergence of a distinct movement we dubbed "Femocrats." (The Republican women, ever wary of the F word, preferred to be called "womanists.") They have discovered that women running for office must run almost as hard against the hostility of men in their own party as against the opposition. So they have developed their own fund-raising, campaign-training, and support networks outside of the



**CAMPAIN ALBUM:**  
"Femocrats" Liz Holtzman, Patty Murray, Geraldine Ferraro, Geri Rothman-Serot, Jean Lloyd-Jones

ALLAIA ANDREWS/OMEGA

*two traditional parties.* Emily's List, the fund for Democratic pro-choice women candidates, is one of the most successful non-PAC funds in existence. It has received some coverage — certainly more than The Wish List, its Republican counterpart, which is growing fast on contributions from disaffected Republican moderates. Women candidates are, astonishingly, beginning to be able to raise decent campaign money and are almost at the stage of being able

to afford to run hard on their records. That's the news of this Year of the Woman — not "Will Hillary Help or Hurt the Ticket?" or, God help us, which wife has a better cookie recipe?

It's hard to miss the real story on women this year. If a reporter will just listen, there are surprises everywhere. One of our favorite surprises at the *Getting It Gazette* came about this way: we were assigning stories about the state galas at the Democratic convention. A

young, untried writer named Janet Reitman wanted to go *anyplace*. We couldn't risk sending her to Democrat-full Texas or crucial California. "Oh, go to Alabama," we said, and we hoped she would have a good time.

She came back, and with perfect savoir faire reported on the women she had met. Silk dresses, curly hair, law degrees, and no nonsense. "Steel magnolias?" they said to her. "Honey, forget that stuff. We're bitches from hell." ♦

# DRAFT

By William Broyles, Jr.

As the coverage of Bill Clinton's draft history and its coverup reminds us, the Vietnam war, which brought out the best and worst in America, did the same for the press. In the beginning the stories were all body counts and no context, no history, no help. The good news is that these dumb simplifications gradually gave way to more thoughtful complexities. The story, over time, got told.

I should begin this with a personal disclaimer. I was at Oxford just before Bill Clinton and, like him, did everything I could to hang on to my draft deferment. Like him, I finally got a deferment — mine in the Peace Corps, his in the ROTC. But, as he claims to have been, I was troubled by the inequity in my success: Why should I be safe when my friends from high school were having to fight and die? I had found a way to live, but I couldn't live with myself. So, as Clinton says he did, I gave up my deferment and made myself eligible for the draft.

There the comparison ends. I went to Vietnam and, unless he is holding back still more information, Bill Clinton did not. That is close to the complete list of facts about this story of which I am personally aware. Did the reporting on this issue add to the truth of the story, or not?

The first wave of coverage, during the early primaries, showed resourceful reporting, but was too often genera-

tionally tone deaf. The implication was that avoiding the draft during Vietnam was the moral equivalent of turning your back on America after Pearl Harbor, and not the accepted practice of an entire generation of college students. It was as if a younger generation of reporters had been let loose without the counsel of older male writers, editors, and news producers, most of whom had themselves evaded the draft.

This simplistic approach was followed by more thoughtful articles of the confusing moral issues the war raised. The newsweeklies were among the first to weigh in with the "how it really was back then" stories. In February, *Time* editor at large Strobe Talbott, one of Clinton's Oxford roommates, wrote a personal defense of the sincerity of Clinton's behavior and recounted the story of another roommate, a draft resister, so troubled by the war that he eventually killed himself.

*Time* also brought out the thoughtful Lance Morrow, who asked: "Has the statute of emotional limitations run out on Vietnam?... Was a prosecutorial press stirring up artificial controversy about something relatively unimportant that happened years ago when Clinton was young? Were the political media roaring along heedlessly aboard a sort of Heisenberg Express, distorting the process even as they observed it?

Well, were they? Morrow doesn't say. He works for *Time*. He doesn't have to answer questions, just ask them. Over at *Newsweek*, Jonathan Alter suggested that part of the press's enthusiasm for this issue came from reporters who wanted Clinton to step up and vindicate their own opposition to the draft and the war. David Hackworth, *Newsweek*'s military affairs expert and

one of the few Vietnam veterans on the story, argued that he would have doubted Clinton's judgment far more had he enlisted in 1969, since by then the war had deteriorated into a bloody, pointless stalemate.

Moral complexities are bad for headlines, so the press found itself playing down the choices Clinton made then and focusing on his increasingly tortuous explanations of those choices now. Although ABC News dug up Clinton's now-famous 1969 letter to his ROTC head — which Clinton then released in a defensive move — the toughest and most solid reporting was almost all in print. Jeffrey H. Birnbaum of *The Wall Street Journal*, who on February 6 broke the original story of Clinton signing up for an ROTC unit he never joined, was out front early and, with William Rempel of the *Los Angeles Times*, stayed there. In September, when it printed the most comprehensive, balanced account of what actually happened, the *Times* also turned up the efforts of Clinton's uncle to delay Clinton's physical and to get him a place in the Naval Reserve.

The Republican attack apparatus helped keep the story alive, even as polls were showing that voters were much less interested in this issue than the press seemed to be. The Republicans could hammer the issue of credibility and draw the constant, unspoken contrast between Bill Clinton, Draft Dodger, with George Bush, War Hero. But if the issue was Clinton's credibility, why was the attack carried at the beginning by Bob Dole, whose crippled arm was a vivid reminder of his own war service? Why even refer to Bush's war service at all?

For a time, the Republican attack diverted attention from the fact that so few leading Republicans had served in Vietnam. To its credit, the press refused to be diverted. Stories homed in on the questionable war records of leading Republicans like Dick Cheney, Rich Bond, Pat Buchanan, and the man most likely to be inspired by George Bush's war record, his son, George W. Bush (who rushed to fulfill his patriotic duty in that haven of draft evaders, the National Guard). In an op-ed piece in *The Washington Post* on the day Bush and Clinton addressed the National

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MICHAEL MANGANO/THE TIDEWATER NEWS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Guard Association, James Fallows wrote that "listening to Bush campaign strategist Mary Matalin call Clinton a draft dodger made me feel like women must feel when men lecture them about abortion."

Again, however, the initial breathless reporting was evidence of how so much of daily journalism lives in a void, ignorant of history, even its own. A few months after the fall of Saigon, Fallows wrote a memorable article called "What Did You Do in the Class War, Daddy?" Fallows, who starved himself to get a deferment, tallied his 1,200 Harvard classmates and found only fifty-six who had entered the military at all, and only two who had gone to Vietnam.

What kept the story going was the persistent belief that Clinton had not leveled about what he did, that in his record was the smoking gun. Clinton answered the questions he was asked, most of the time truthfully. But a lot of

small truths didn't add up to the larger truth, indeed added up to some troubling questions about just whether Bill Clinton even knew what the truth was. What, exactly, does that say about his character? That he is a liar, that he has selective memory, that, as the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* argued, he has a contempt for history — or that the mind is a mysterious thing?

Reading all this coverage I found myself wondering if the press is too blunt an instrument to probe such sensitive psychological terrain. How well would we journalists answer shouted questions about what we did twenty-five years ago?

When journalists who didn't serve are asked about the war, they tend to become ... Bill Clinton! I asked the *Journal's* Jeffrey Birnbaum, one of the most responsible and resourceful reporters covering the story, about his own history. First, he pointed out that he

himself had had a draft number, implying he had been caught up in the war. Then he mentioned it was a high number, but, when asked, at first couldn't remember exactly what it was. I pointed out that by the time he turned eighteen, the earliest he could possibly have been drafted, all American combat troops had been withdrawn from Vietnam. Then he remembered that he had been 4-F all along. I suspect many male reporters and editors, if put on the spot, would give equally tortuous explanations.

But why use other journalists when my own case is worse? Shortly before I wrote this story a friend reminded me of how he had tried to get me a direct commission at the Pentagon to save me from going to Vietnam. Even though this was for me a matter of life and death, I had completely forgotten about it. If I had been asked, I would have denied the story with utter conviction. But it was true.



**CAMPAGN**  
**ALBUM:** Bush  
feels faint.  
Quayle plays  
teacher.  
Clinton shows  
gains.

SYGMA

GOOD MORNING,  
GOVERNOR CLINTON  
HOW ARE YOU?

WELL, I'M ALL RIGHT.  
I'M DISAPPOINTED  
YOU DIDN'T CALL ME  
**BUBBA.**



# Talk Radio

## Turning Up The Volume

By Mike Hoyt

Illustrations by Paul Kirchner

A couple of days into the Democratic party convention Don Imus, the mercurial morning radio host on New York's WFAN, was discussing his earlier interview with Mario Cuomo and urging listeners to read Garry Wills's devastating piece on Ross Perot in *The New York Review of Books*. Then, effortlessly downshifting, he began making fun of Nelson Mandela's accent and urging the station's traffic person to attend a promotional event without her bra.

Talk radio can go anywhere, and it does. Its number-one topic this year, not surprisingly, is politics, and the medium can elevate or degrade political discussion faster than you can dial an 800 number.

It is growing, meanwhile, not only in terms of stations and listeners, but in terms of political influence — and probably at the expense of the mainstream press. Why? "Talk media is to the dominant media institutions what Ross Perot is to the dominant political institutions," syndicated radio star Rush Limbaugh told *Broadcasting* magazine back in June. "It is the portion of the media that the people trust the most." Limbaugh may want to rewire his analogy now that Perot has drawn down so heavily on his public-trust account, but is there something to it? Back in a moment....

April 2, *Imus in the Morning*, WFAN in New York:

**IMUS:** Well, here now on a phone with us, the governor of Arkansas, who, as you probably

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*Mike Hoyt is associate editor of CJR. As this issue went to press, the Roper Organization was conducting a survey for CJR on the impact of talk radio on voter behavior. For a faxed copy of the results, call CJR (212-854-1881) after October 27.*

## The fact that ordinary people get into the loop on talk radio doesn't guarantee democratic dialogue

know, is running for the presidency of the United States. Good morning, Governor Clinton.

**CLINTON:** Good morning, Don.

**IMUS:** How are you?

**CLINTON:** Well, I'm all right. I'm disappointed you didn't call me bubba.

**IMUS:** Well...

**CLINTON:** It's an honorable term where I come from. It's just southern for mensch.

**IMUS:** I'd actually read in *The New York Times* that that was a derisive term, but then that was *The New York Times*.... At what point yesterday, when you were on that simpleminded nitwit *Donahue* show, did you realize that [appearing on it] might not be the right thing to do?

**CLINTON:** Oh, I think it was all right.

**IMUS:** At least you haven't been accused of having any sort of relationship with unattractive women. I mean, what if Roseanne Arnold were calling Ted Koppel, saying, "Yeah, I been sleeping with Governor Clinton"? I mean, that would be a problem.

**CLINTON:** Listen, if she did that, I'd file a palimony suit against her. She's got the number-one TV show in America, and I could finance the rest of this presidential campaign. It'd be better than Jerry Brown's 800 number....

Politicians pay attention to talk radio because people do. Connecticut Governor Lowell Weicker even switched places with Imus for a day this summer, giving us a brief *Weicker in the Morning* show. On the presidential level, Jerry Brown's attention to talk radio in Connecticut was seen by some observers as key to his victory in the primary there, just as Clinton's appearances on *Donahue* and *Imus* during the very tough New York primary were said to have helped keep his campaign alive.

In June, Clinton and Dan Quayle both addressed the fourth annual convention of the National Association of Radio Talk Show Hosts, as did Big Media insiders like ABC's Sam Donaldson, *Newsweek's* Eleanor Clift, and CNN/W.R. Grace & Company's John Sununu.

Rush Limbaugh, meanwhile, visiting George Bush at the White House, sitting regally in Quayle's box at the GOP convention, hosting a new Roger Ailes-produced TV show, pushing a new bestseller in the bookstores, and with his radio show now carried on some *five hundred* stations, stands out as a one-man symbol of the rising political influence of the medium. Sometimes wickedly funny, some-

times just plain wicked, Limbaugh has become the big bartender for a national saloon of the conservative mind. You can imagine customers leaning forward expectantly as he puts down a pair of frozen margaritas to do his "Slick Willie" impersonation, which in audio version consists of the sounds of somebody making love.

News/talk format radio (which includes all-news stations) ranks second in the seventy-five top markets of the country, according to a national database kept by The Arbitron Company and *Billboard* magazine; it trails the Adult Contemporary music format, but edged out Top 40 in 1990. According to Michael Harrison, a talk show host at WTIC in Hartford, Connecticut, and the editor of *Talkers*, a trade publication, the number of all-talk or news-talk stations in the U.S. has climbed from some 200 ten years ago to about 850 now. (The airwaves, meanwhile, seem to be as racially segregated as the rest of American society: a recent *Radio & Records* survey of seventy-three "mainstream" news/talk format stations — as opposed to black format stations — in the top 100 markets found just fourteen blacks hosting daily talk shows.)

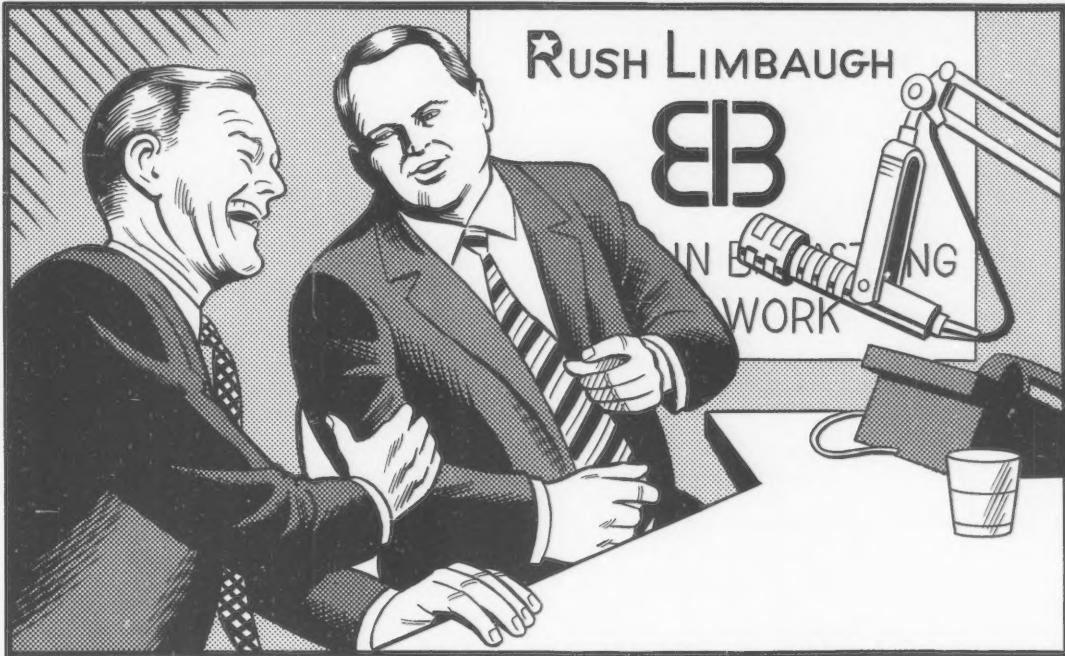
Technology — from car phones to satellite networks — has spurred the growth of the medium. Economics, too. With the rise of FM radio and its superior sound quality in the 1970s and '80s, AM radio was left without a reason to be — until it latched on to talk.

And we can take a stab at identifying sociopolitical reasons for the rise of talk radio. For one thing, in a world where front-porch, front-stoop conversation is disappearing, people yearn to connect. For another, of course, two-way talk radio is a great vent for political frustration, of which there is no shortage. It fits the mad-as-hell-not-going-to-take-it-anymore national mood.

March 13, *The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*, a discussion on the House banking affair, with guests including Rush Limbaugh and California congressman Vic Fazio:

**LEHRER:** Mr. Limbaugh, on the question of outrage, somebody said today that this scandal was like handing gasoline and matches to the radio talk shows all over the country. Is that correct?

**LIMBAUGH:** Well...in a sense it gives us an issue, but I think the thing that needs to be said about that, Jim, is that radio talk show hosts...don't invent emotion. It was there. I mean, the public is angry as they can be about that and there's one good reason for it. This is easy to understand. This is something *they* can't do. This



**RUSH LIMBAUGH, WHO HAS VISITED BUSH IN THE WHITE HOUSE, GOT A VISIT FROM THE PRESIDENT IN HIS STUDIO ON SEPTEMBER 21. BUSH TOLD LISTENERS THAT THE ECONOMY IS "POISED FOR A DRAMATIC RECOVERY."**

is the epitome of arrogance. This is the epitome of condescension....

It takes a simple issue like this where you guys [speaking now to Representative Fazio] can go in and float loans for yourself interest free...you sit there and say it's not taxpayer money. It is *all* taxpayer money. That's the point. You guys are *our* employees and you treat people in the country like we are *your* employees and you're the boss. And it just won't do anymore....

The subtleties of the House banking affair — that the system allowing overdrafts was 150 years old, that some of the congressmen who were tarred wrote few overdrafts and seemed to be victims of sloppy bank management rather than abusers of the system, that much of the anger over the affair seemed to really be about something else, probably about rising economic pressure on the middle class and the inability of government to do anything about it — these things often got short shrift on talk radio. Subtleties can get knocked off the table when the red meat is served.

That was certainly the case in New Jersey two years ago when Governor Jim Florio served up a feast. Faced with a \$3 billion deficit and a state supreme court decision which ruled that the state's twenty-eight poorest school districts had to be funded at a level equal to the richest districts, Florio, who had said during his election campaign that he saw no need for new taxes, pushed through a \$2.8

billion income- and sales-tax package. Part of the money was supposed to go back to middle class districts, under a hard-to-understand formula meant to put more of the tax hike's burden on the wealthy and less on ordinary folks. Ordinary folks were not buying, however.

Just before this time, Trenton radio station WKXW-FM, limping along in eighth place in the central Jersey market, had turned to an oldies/talk format. Along with playing "Love Me Tender" and "Great Balls of Fire," the WKXW personalities began asking listeners what was on their minds. Taxes was the answer, and soon the station became the focal point of a statewide protest movement, serving as a big-voiced cheerleader.

One of the early callers to the station was John Budzash, a young postal worker who had been listening on his car radio and was mad enough to find a pay phone and speak his mind. How mad? Mad enough to sign petitions, organize protests, whatever, Budzash told the radio jock. So *do* it, the host replied. Budzash soon became a founding member of Hands Across New Jersey, the leading edge of the tax revolt that, in the end, swept the Democrats out of power and, eventually, reversed the sales-tax part of Florio's package. "The station started it all," says an editorial writer at a large New Jersey newspaper, adding somewhat wistfully, "We don't have that kind of power."

On the other hand, no editorial page in the state was likely to illuminate the critical tax-and-budget debates with the print equivalents of the theme song from *Jaws* or a

soundtrack of barnyard pigs, as WKXW did. The station can claim credit for being in touch with the mood of its stressed-out listeners, for recognizing an explosive issue before the rest of the media. But it is unlikely to win any awards for bringing thoughtfulness, context, or fairness to the table.

One of the subtleties the station did not dwell on was explored in the north Jersey newspaper *The Record*, which pointed out that under Florio's plan postal worker Budzash was one of those middle-class taxpayers whose tax bill seemed to be heading down. He did not make enough to be hit with the income tax hike, he was in line for a \$500 property-tax rebate, and, since his town was one of those slated to get several million more dollars in state school aid, his property taxes were likely to decrease even further. "Facts are not terribly key" on WKXW, says Chris Mondics, one of the paper's statehouse reporters. "There are many instances in which the talk show hosts seized on an issue without fully understanding it. They come from the perspective of accusing everyone who holds a government office of being corrupt.

"And there's a meanness to it, a viciousness that doesn't contribute to a civilized debate," he adds. "They do a lot of emoting; it's not a rational parsing of the issues."

May 10, *The Michael Jackson Show*, KABC radio, live from Central High School in central Los Angeles. (Shortly after the riots, the South African-born talk show host took his call-in show to four Los Angeles schools.)

**JACKSON:** We've just heard from a teacher who's been here for many, many years, and she said that different people have different values attendant to education. And, in fact, I think she was saying that if you are African-American they don't care as much as, say, the Koreans or the Italians or the Jews or, you know, you name it.

**TEACHER #2:** First of all, I don't buy that at all. Matter of fact, I sort of resent that implication. It's just a perception. There is not a student in here whose parents don't care as much as the parents do in Beverly Hills.

**TEACHER #1:** I didn't say they didn't care about the students. Why aren't they pushing them to school every day? Why did I have thirty-four seniors that may not graduate?

**TEACHER #2:** In the middle-class white areas there are plenty of little mommies at home to make sure everything is perfect. You have not only the mothers and fathers in our communities

working, you have the older sisters and brothers working to try to hold this thing together....

**TEACHER #1:** Most parents work. I think you are lumping us all together again, like you told us not to do.

**TEACHER #3:** ...that's an insensitive statement, and insensitivity is the root of what's behind all the trouble in Los Angeles. If she [teacher #1] was really concerned that ten of her students were not in her class, why did she not call their parents, pull the students aside, say, "What's going on here?" A lot of teachers do, and we find out that a lot of these students have to work. A lot of these families are one paycheck from bankruptcy.

**TEACHER #1:** I am sensitive. I am concerned. I grew up in a one-parent family. My mother worked the whole time; she was not home. I've been stopped by the police. I've been afraid. I've not been treated lovey-dovey. That's, that's why I'm still here!

**TEACHER #3:** But wait....(fade to commercial break)

The fact that ordinary people get into the loop on talk radio doesn't guarantee democratic dialogue, of course. That's up to the hosts, who range from Deborah Norville to Randall Terry to Studs Terkel to G. Gordon Liddy. "When all is said and done, the entire flavor of the programs is determined by the ideology and the commercial perquisites of the host," says Murray Levin, a professor of political science at Boston University and the author of *Talk Radio and the American Dream*. "Some are intellectuals, some are demagogues; some are serious, some are clowns. If they have a democratic disposition, you get a democratic dialectic; if they are demagogues, you don't."

And there are demagogues, semi-demagogues, and no shortage of hosts who dance around the edge, at least, of hostility toward women, gays, Jews, or blacks. The Anti-Defamation League reports persistent complaints of anti-Semitism, for example, against Myles Smith, Jr., who hosts the *Ralph from Ben Hill* program on WGST in Atlanta, and against some regular guests on Imhotep Gary Byrd's show, broadcast live from the Apollo Theater in Harlem on WLIR. Bob Grant, the sour conservative who follows Limbaugh, the funny conservative, on New York's WABC, has been credited with being first to call New York's black mayor a "washroom attendant." On a recent summer afternoon he was interviewing a police officer about the rash of car thefts in Newark by thrill-seeking young blacks. The cop noted that, although car theft and thrill riding are clas-

## Rush Limbaugh has become the big bartender for a national saloon of the conservative mind

sified as nonviolent crimes, they can put the perpetrators in a wheelchair or even the morgue. "Good!" said Grant. "Put them in the morgue, where they won't bother anybody anymore."

Part of talk radio's power stems from its loose rules, and, not surprisingly, trash gets on the air. Take Howard Stern, whose popular New York show is spreading to other cities like the new strain of drug-resistant tuberculosis. Stern, who drops his cynic's pose only when doing commercials, opened in Dallas recently, and joked that he would celebrate the event by parading along the Kennedy assassination route and sponsoring a "brain-catching contest."

If talk radio is America's last small town, as somebody once said, then like any small town it can be small-minded and vicious or open-minded and big-hearted. Even Ross Perot, the patron saint of talk media, worries about its dark side. "We're now in a phase of talk shows that are more just sort of wrestling matches and confrontational — trying to give the audience a substitute for Saturday night wrestling, I guess," he told Michael Harrison, on Hartford's WTIC. "I feel that on the issues that face the country and determine what kind of world our children will live in, we'd be far shrewder to discuss them in a very balanced way."

What Perot seemed to be calling for is journalistic standards — fairness, thoroughness, context, and so forth — the goals, at least, of the mainstream press he tried so hard to bypass. Talk radio has different goals, however. "I wouldn't call it journalism. It's part entertainment, part opinion, part debate," says Mark Jurkowitz, who wears two media hats — press critic for *The Boston Phoenix* and, starting this fall, daily drive-time talk show host on Boston's WHDH. "You have a different sense of principles in talk radio. The bottom line is energy and creating some bond between you and the callers."

"I'm not a journalist," says Mary Beal, a host on Wichita's KNSS and chairman of the board of the National Association of Radio Talk Show Hosts. "I don't care if I have a balanced viewpoint, because any opinion can be challenged by the people who call in."

Most of the better talk show hosts, like Beal, do achieve a sort of balance, however. Like a lot of her colleagues, she rode far on the populist wave of resentment against the House banking affair last spring. But she also invited her local overdraft-prone congressman, Dan Glickman, to defend himself on the air. And geographical, gender, and political balance is pretty much the idea behind *Live Line America*, the thoughtful syndicated show she has

hosted with Boston's Doug Stephan since November. Stephan, Beal says, is "more conservative in all the areas that I am liberal, and vice versa. I'm a conservative in the fiscal sense but liberal in a social sense."

Mark Jurkowitz, also in Boston, describes himself as leaning to the "liberal progressive" side on political matters, but he is paired on his new show with a conservative black minister, the Reverend Earl Jackson. And in New York, Curtis Sliwa, founder of the Guardian Angels, the anti-crime pro-youth organization, is paired with his wife, Lisa, the group's director, who often disagrees with him on matters of politics. "You say *I flip-flop?*" she asked him in the course of a mid-September argument over Senate candidate Geraldine Ferraro. "Honey, *you* flip-flop more than the pancakes at the Cheyenne Diner!" When Curtis and occasional co-host Lynn Samuels held a running debate on whether Bill Clinton's draft record is relevant to the election, listeners passionately joined in. "I have had a lot of respect for you, Curtis," said a New Jersey construction worker and former Bush-Quayle voter. "But we gotta get back to education and the economy and the important things. We can't even find work out here."

August 25, the *Rambling With Gambling* show on WOR in New York, with Ken and Daria Dolan substituting for John Gambling, Jr., and conducting a straw poll:

**ANN:** I'm definitely for Clinton.

**KEN DOLAN:** Oh boy.

**ANN:** Oh boy, yeah. Economics. The rich have gotten richer, the poor are poorer, and I'm being squeezed.

**KEN:** You feel you're being pushed into a box? I expect you are not alone in that feeling, Ann. Thank you. Hello, Mabel, in Long Island!

**MABEL:** Hi! I'm for Bush. Every time I look at Bill Clinton I see the face of Teddy Kennedy, number one. Number two, Mr. Bush may not be for pro choice in abortion but he is for pro choice in education. The people who want to send their children to parochial schools need a little bit of help.

**KEN:** Thank you, Mabel.

**DARIA DOLAN:** Mike, what's your opinion? Who are you voting for?

**MIKE:** President Bush.

**DARIA:** Well, Bush is coming up here [in the straw poll] at the end!

**MIKE:** The reason being that President Bush's

## It is becoming all too easy to make the case that the big media have drifted away from ordinary people

mettle has been tested; Clinton's hasn't. And I would go for a man who has courage and has had his mettle tested, than for a fellow who maybe lurks ... in the background, as Governor Clinton.

**KEN DOLAN:** All right, good deal. A little closer to home — Brooklyn — Hi, Van, what's on your mind?

**VAN:** Definitely Bush. Stronger power in government, which the Democrats espouse, has made Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia go down the drain. What made our country great was excellence in education.... And it's the rich that made the great institutions of this country. There's nothing wrong with the rich. The rich keep our country powerful. Thank you.

**KEN:** Wow! A little speech there. Well, what is it [the count in the straw poll] so far?

**DARIA:** ... Interesting statistics as we stand right now at ten minutes before ten in the morning on WOR — Governor Clinton eleven to President Bush's seven.

**KEN:** Let's go one more. Arlene from Oceanside.

**ARLENE:** I'm a Clinton lady, all the way. I think Mr. Bush has been the worst thing that's happened to New York City and Long Island since I don't know when....

What we hear on talk radio is not exactly the voice of America. Talk radio experts say that only about 1 or 2 percent of the listeners ever call in, and market research shows that the audience is a little older and slightly better off than the average citizen.

Activists and interest groups, meanwhile, try to shape the medium, as they do the press. "Call in to talk radio shows," suggests a September letter to potential supporters from Women Working for Clinton/Gore. "Call your local radio talk show," urges the September 17 "Daily Line for Republican Newsmakers," which was pushing the Clinton-and-the-draft issue at the time. The National Forum Foundation, which president Jim Denton describes as "right-of-center" but "inclusive," regularly sends out suggested guest lists and talking points on major issues to some 200 talk show hosts.

Still, we are more likely to hear something resembling the voice of ordinary America on talk radio than we are on, say, *NBC Nightly News* or *Nightline* or *MacNeil/Lehrer*.

"Talk radio is the only medium in which you get a substantial number of working people on, and the only one in which there is enough time for them to debate and hold

extended, serious discussions," says Boston University's Murray Levin.

"This may be the only kind of dialogue that actively solicits ordinary people," says Mark Jurkowitz, of Boston's *Phoenix* and WHDH. "Alienation? Absolutely. If people felt the classic institutions — Washington, government, mainstream media — were functioning better, there would be less of a demand for talk radio."

It is becoming all too easy to make the case that the big media have drifted away from ordinary people. As Daniel Hallin of the University of California at San Diego has pointed out, voters accounted for more than 20 percent of the sound-bites in television network political coverage in 1972 and 1976, but were squeezed down to just 3 to 4 percent by 1984 and 1988 (see "Whose Campaign Is It, Anyway?" *CJR*, January/February 1991). In some cases the chief connection to the rank and file is opinion polls, where people are reduced to nodes on a graph. Too much news comes from the heavyweights and political pros. Local television seems interested in ordinary citizens chiefly when they are victims of the latest horrific crime or natural disaster. And television is not interested in feedback.

Local newspaper editors, meanwhile, spend more and more of their mental energy on marketing surveys, in search of some statistical hologram of a reader, while giving their reporters less and less time to go to where actual people live and work and talk. Too many of them seem swayed by the notion that people have no time for issues that are too complicated or political.

The evidence from talk radio ought to give them pause. *Talkers*, the talk media publication, includes a regular feature called "The Talkers Ten," a list of the most-talked-about subjects, based on a survey of more than 100 issues-oriented hosts and producers from various-sized markets across the country. In September the hottest topic was the presidential election, followed by the economy, the health care crisis, and foreign affairs (Iraq, South Africa, what's left of Yugoslavia, and the free-trade issue). Rounding out the list was education, Hurricane Andrew (and government vs. private relief efforts — what works?), abortion, child abuse (sparked by a show on *Oprah*, according to the survey), civil rights (plus race, gender, and heterosexual/homosexual relations), and crime and drugs.

Politics and hurricanes, it seems, temporarily blew another topic that had been in the top ten all spring — "the media" — off the list. "The media's role in America's changing democracy," a May *Talkers* Ten survey explained, "seems to be an ongoing topic of debate and analysis. The public is growing as critical and contemptuous of the press and journalists as it has been of politicians." ♦

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# MEDIA BASHING

Down in Houston, Mrs. Bush and others had wicked things to say about press bias. Did they have a case?

By Christopher Hanson

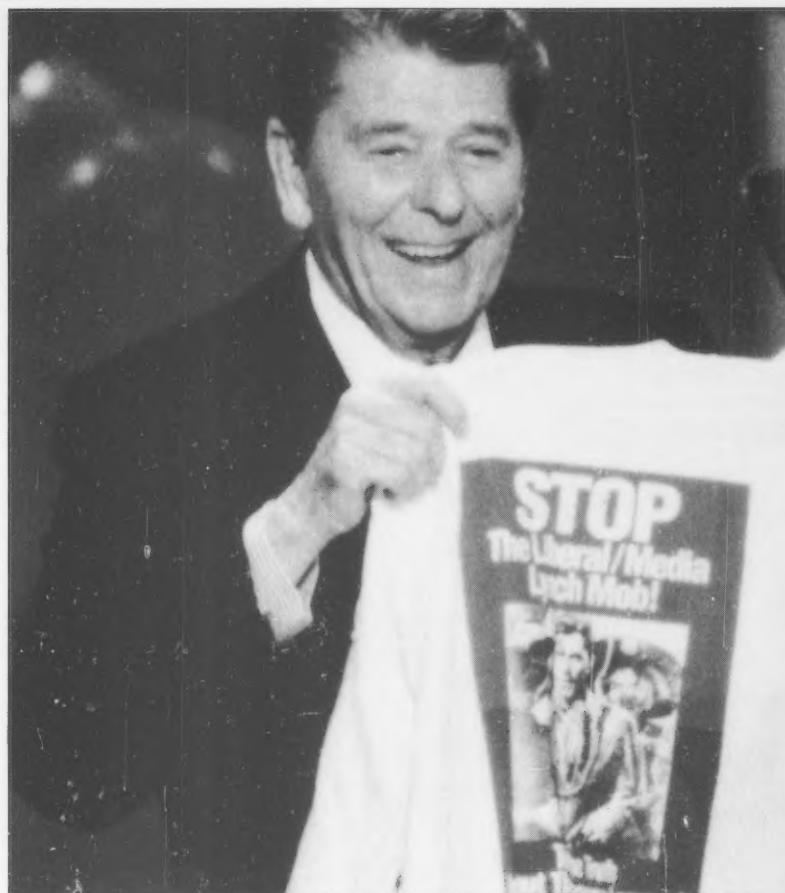
**George W. Bush** (son of the president): *You're not as bad a guy as they say you are, you know that?*

**Dan Rather:** "Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, I'm glad you think so, uh, do me a favor; tell your mother hello for me.

(From a CBS news broadcast, August 17)

**J**ournalists tend to enjoy meeting fans of their work, but, perversely enough, it actually can be far more stimulating to mingle with those who despise the news media. This is why attending the 1992 Republican national convention in Houston was such a pleasure. Comments like those of George W. Bush, quoted above, were unusual. Quite unusual. Indeed, a great many of the Republicans who gathered in Houston were not just down on the press; they were not just occasionally exasperated with us political reporters. No, these were people who loathed us to the core for our perceived biases. People who, if they had a hammer, would pound us in the morning. Pound us in the evening. All over this land.

Christopher Hanson is Washington correspondent for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and a contributing editor to CJR. The Media Research Center provided videotapes of news broadcasts for research on this article.



And, in point of fact, they *did* have a hammer. We provided them with the hammer — that is, with live TV interviews and other forums that they used to attack us for supposedly slanted coverage. Indeed, we actually *were* the hammer, as well as the nail.

That masochistic little arrangement should have been punishment enough for the media folk assigned to Houston. But there was more. Exaggerated though the Republicans' press criticism was, it contained enough traces of accuracy to make some of us journalists a little uneasy, stirring up feelings that we were, once again, as in 1988, '84, '80, '76, doing a less than sterling job of presidential campaign coverage (more about which shortly).

In its harshest form, the Republican anti-media message in Houston was this: America's political press corps is a gang of reckless, left-leaning ideologues masquerading as detached observers; a pack whose real agenda is to defeat

politicians who stand for unfettered free enterprise, religious piety, family values, lower taxes, and other conservative principles; a shady group which, convinced that Bill Clinton has a real chance to win, is hell-bent on assuring that Republican control of the White House finally ends. It was as if a typical political reporter, returning from his day's mischief, might look into the mirror and declare: "Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer by this son of Little Rock."

On the convention floor, some delegates waved signs denouncing the "Liberal-Media Lynch Mob." Others wore buttons or T-shirts that said, "Rather Biased," "Don't Believe the Liberal Media," and "Ye Olde Sleaze Monger." Reporters came away with notebooks filled with fulminations against the press ("There's been a love fest with Clinton. It's worse than I've ever seen. If we don't attack [the press], what can we do?") — Florida delegate



VALERIE AMBERSON

Nancy Wood, quoted in *The New York Times*, August 18; "The so-called recession is media-driven hype" — Arkansas delegate Terry Hayes, quoted in *The Christian Science Monitor*, August 20; etc., etc.). At a rally of Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition, in a hotel across the street from the Astrodome, a throng of conservative evangelicals laughed immoderately when the master of ceremonies, singer Pat Boone, facetiously instructed them not to crush reporters underfoot.

Meanwhile, throughout convention week, prominent Republicans railed against the news media. In his nomination acceptance speech, President Bush ridiculed the press's negativism and supposed pro-Clinton bias: "You don't hear much about this good news because the media also tends to focus only on the bad. And when the Berlin Wall fell, I half expected to see a headline: WALL FALLS, THREE BORDER GUARDS LOSE JOBS. And underneath, it



### **Barbara Bush warns PBS's Judy Woodruff: "I'm going to monitor you."**

probably says, CLINTON BLAMES BUSH." Vice-president Dan Quayle, addressing the evangelicals, drew loud cheers when he declared: "I don't care what the media say ... I will never back down." Republican party chairman Rich Bond denounced a *Houston Chronicle* headline, QUAYLE TRIES TO PLAY UP MARTYR ROLE, as unfair, crumpled up the paper, and stormed out of a press conference. And so on.

Republicans also bore down on reporters in one-on-one exchanges. For instance, on August 18 NBC's Maria Shriver asked Bruce Herschensohn, a California Senate contender running against a woman, whether voters saw women candidates as the best instruments of change. He shot back: "That's sexist and it's prejudiced and it's biased." All Shriver could manage after that was, "Back to you, Tom." Even more striking was Barbara Bush's exchange that night with Judy Woodruff on PBS. Woodruff, taking a tougher tone than she had with Hillary Clinton a month earlier, asked Mrs. Bush about her husband's reelection troubles, divisive convention rhetoric, and Democrat-bashing in Houston. Mrs. Bush grew increasingly testy and then retaliated with an intense counter-barrage, excerpts of which follow:

**Mrs. Bush:** You said you weren't going to ask all these same old questions.... Were you at the Democratic convention? I didn't hear you asking

those questions there. And we were bashed beyond belief.... Listen, you're saying nothing nice.

**Woodruff:** I'm only asking some fair questions.

**Mrs. Bush:** You were not. You were not...

**Woodruff:** I ask you these things because...

**Mrs. Bush:** (interrupting) I know why you ask them.

**Woodruff:** ...Because ... you and the president said emphatically there is no place in the campaign for [allegations of adultery against Clinton] and yet people keep bringing them up.

**Mrs. Bush:** You didn't listen to the Democrat convention, I think, and you didn't listen to the rumors that the Democrats are spreading about us.... I'm going to listen to your questions. I'm going to monitor you.

**W**ere Mrs. Bush and other Republican critics hitting close to the target? Has the coverage this year really been slanted unfairly toward Clinton?

The notion of some sort of orchestrated, partisan press assault on the Republican party — some organized plot to promote Democrats — is just not believable. Clinton himself has gone through cycles of intense media assault this year. Incumbent presidents usually end up disgusted with the press, and there is nothing partisan about this feeling — Democrats from Harry Truman to Jimmy Carter were unhappy about their treatment. Even top Republicans concede some of their recent attacks on the press were con-

trived for political effect. As Rich Bond told *The Washington Post*, putting pressure on the media was rather like a coach "playing the referees" in hope of winning by intimidation.

**E**ven so, *some* of this year's coverage has indeed given the appearance of cheerleading for Clinton. There was, for instance, the breezy, 1,700-word, July 22 *Washington Post* piece about Bill Clinton and Al Gore's post-convention bus tour, whose headline, ...NEW HEARTTHROBS OF THE HEARTLAND, drew understandable groans of disgust from GOP operatives. (There's no reason to doubt the article's factual accuracy, but its tone was in keeping with the headline: "Bill Clinton and Al Gore are conducting what may be the most daring invasion of unfriendly turf since Lee crossed the Mason-Dixon line on his way to Gettysburg. Lee's desperate gamble ended in disaster; the Democrats have so far looked gloriously triumphant.... The second thing you notice is the star power. The passion inspired by celebrity.... They are Butch and Sundance.... Clinton and Gore go together like a flannel lumberjack shirt and bluejeans. They match! They fit together in a photograph the way George Bush and Dan Quayle never could...." etc.)

Meanwhile, on ABC's *Good Morning America* Joan Lunden happily talked the bus tour, seeming to put her stamp of approval on the Democrats' promotional scheme by noting a common bond — the *GMA* team had taken bus tours itself: "We've been everywhere, from the Midwest to the South to New England, and, perhaps taking our cue, Bill Clinton and Al Gore and their wives and all the folks are on the road 'In Search of America!'" Her co-host, Charles Gibson, was soon parroting: "We have taken regular bus tours through various parts of the country and ... taking a bus tour is a great way to ... meet people and that, of course, is the idea behind the Democratic presidential campaign road trip."

Come now, isn't this rather like saying that a Fuller Brush man comes to your door because he wants to socialize? The point of a bus tour, like the point of Bush's more traditional, set-

piece campaign events, is to make the sale. (The mushy *GMA* news feature that followed Gibson's introduction no doubt helped the Democrats make their sale — it was dolloped with sound-bites of Clinton & Co. all marveling over just how well they were doing.)

There is also the matter of softballs, which were tossed at Democrats for far too many innings this summer, much to the irritation of the conservative Media Research Center. It kept tabs on easy lobs such as these: Katie Couric to Clinton's mother, Virginia Kelley: "I read that [Clinton] used to walk to church alone with a Bible under his arm"; ABC's Nancy Snyderman to Bill and Hillary Clinton: "You both [look] remarkably young to take on the White House and that's been what people say — oh!"; Jane Pauley to Hillary Clinton: "When you hear yourself held up as you were at the Republican convention ... does it make you hurt or make you mad?..." Questions along these lines, of course, are little more than invitations to make propaganda.

But when it comes to serving as conduits for Democratic pap, nothing can top the July 20 *People* magazine cover story, "At Home With The Clinton Family: Hillary and Bill talk about tag-team parenting, their bruising run for the White House and staying in love." The nine-page, forty-five-paragraph piece — with nine photos of the Clintons and their daughter Chelsea in mutually adoring family poses — appeared at a time when the Clinton camp was intent on easing voters' doubts about the candidate's alleged "womanizing" and his commitment to "family values." The article was overwhelmingly favorable, so one-sided that it resembled the "meet Bill Clinton" propaganda film aired at the Democratic convention. Like that film, the article took pains to depict Clinton as a committed family man, devoted to his wife and daughter ("at the center of their lives is Chelsea.... They are careful about movies Chelsea sees..."); a man of faith ("I sing in my own church choir") who, Truman- or Lincoln-like, raised himself from modest circumstances ("Young Bill Clinton helped out in his grandfather Eldridge Cassidy's grocery store, located in a predominant-

ly black neighborhood..."); a man who now stands poised to become a kind of poor man's Jack Kennedy for the '90s ("If Bill Clinton wins the presidency, the torch will finally pass to the generation of Americans born after World War II — a generation with which the Clintons both identify and empathize").

Having this article appear in *People* was an enormous propaganda coup for the Democrats. The magazine has a huge circulation (3,208,000) and the Clinton Family edition was still sitting in doctors' and dentists' offices as the November 3 election approached. The piece will probably be seen by more potential voters than any network news profile. (*The Washington Post*, in a lengthy August 10 profile of Clinton media adviser Mandy Grunwald, credits her with planting the piece, citing this as an example of p.r. acumen.)

**W**e in the news business are supposed to maintain some semblance of neutrality, as everyone knows. But we are also generally positioned on the liberal side of the deep cultural divide over social issues, from school prayer to gay rights. In emotionally charged circumstances like Houston, where the religious right played such a prominent role, it is sometimes hard to resist the temptation to preach rather than report.

CBS's Connie Chung, for instance, got carried away over the abortion issue. The Republican platform committee approved an absolute ban on abortion and party pro-choicers failed in a bid to reverse this on the convention floor. They could not get the backing of the six state delegations required to launch a floor fight. Chung was clearly dismayed. Instead of merely questioning pro-choice Maine Governor John McKernan, Jr., on August 17, she browbeat him for losing out in the floor fight maneuvering:

**Chung:** Tell me, Governor McKernan. You are such a strong supporter of abortion rights, but you gave up, you succumbed to the pressure.

**McKernan:** We did everything we thought we could do, we fought the battles...

**Chung:** (interrupting) Many people

think you weren't organized, you didn't have your ducks in line, you didn't have the delegates.

**McKernan:** ...We obviously did not have... six states.... I think we are making good progress, but the important part...

**Chung:** (interrupting) No, it seems like such a *small* number. Good heavens, all you needed was six state delegations.... I mean, I don't think you were organized, sir.

Chung was left vulnerable to accusations of excessive partiality in her coverage. Conservative L. Brent Bozell's *MediaWatch* newsletter reported on her tirade under the headline "Try Harder For Connie."

In contrast to coverage that tilts to the liberal side, there are, of course, plenty of examples that can be construed as favorable to Bush. For instance, the president repackaged several economic proposals and recast them on September 10, and this transparent ploy was nonetheless widely covered as a big, big story: BUSH STRESSES PROPOSAL TO SLASH TAXES AND SPENDING, *The New York Times*, September 11, page A1, above the fold, etc.

"Transparent ploy"? You've caught me. My own biases are intruding here, and definitely not for the first time. One person's distortion is another's fair coverage, which is why this subject is so murky and aggravating. For that matter, media critics cannot even agree, in many cases, on what sort of bias "biased" coverage actually displays. Take this year's Democratic convention reportage. The conservative Media Research Center complains that the networks, parroting Clinton's campaign, cast the '92 Democratic team as "moderate," using the label dozens of times to obscure what conservatives see as the party's persistent tax-and-spend, abortion-on-demand liberalism. On the other hand, the left-leaning Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) objects that, far from making Clinton seem too conservative, the coverage made him seem too liberal by failing to stress the role of financial backing from conservative businesses (Dow Chemical, ARCO, The Tobacco Institute, etc.) in his rise.

According to S. Robert Lichten, of the Center for Media and Public Affairs, Democrats clearly enjoyed the lion's

## It is sometimes hard to resist the temptation to preach rather than report

share of positive news treatment in the first half of 1992. Lichten, summing up his center's findings in a September 6 column, said that during the primaries 46 percent of the comments on network news shows about Democratic candidates were positive, while only 22 percent of the comments about Bush were positive (and 35 percent for challenger Pat Buchanan).

"Since the primaries ended," Lichten continued, "a majority (58 percent) of nonpartisan sources have applauded Clinton and Gore, while 71 percent have panned Bush and Quayle.... [Our results] certainly show a lack of balance."

As Lichten himself suggests, this pattern of coverage cannot be attributed unequivocally to reporters' pro-Clinton or anti-Bush biases. He said a tendency of journalists to support the underdog helped Clinton because "an incumbent president is treated as the ultimate frontrunner." As several commentators have also pointed out, the sour economy and last summer's disarray in the Bush camp prompted much of the negative commentary about the president, and Clinton's surge in the polls after Ross Perot dropped out of contention last July probably provoked the ensuing spasm of highly favorable coverage, including the bus tour stuff.

By September, the pro-Clinton spasms had subsided. Clinton was once again being battered in the press for discrepancies in his accounts of how he avoided military service in Vietnam. He and his aides were complaining about the press coverage. Clinton aide Paul Begala groused to a Gannett man that reporters had failed to follow a new lead, turned up in papers relating to Casper Weinberger's Iran-contra trial, suggesting that Bush knew more about the scandal than he had let on. "That's

media bias. [They're] so cowed by Bush you can hear them moo," Begala maintained.

**M**eanwhile, George Bush (under new management) was demonstrating that even a beleaguered president can dominate the news if one James Baker happens to be calling the plays. Here are some examples of Bush's own spasm of news dominance, taken from a stack of newspapers near my desk: *The New York Times*, September 3, leads page one with Bush directing \$8 BILLION ... TO WHEAT FARMERS AND ARMS WORKERS (Clinton covered on page A20); *The New York Times*, September 9, leads with PRESIDENT SEEKING \$7.6 BILLION TO AID HURRICANE VICTIMS (Clinton doing recounted on A14); *The Washington Post*, September 10, leads, above the fold, with account of Bush restating an old position, ... VOWS NO MORE TAX RAISES (Clinton relegated to A12); the *Post* on September 11, again above the fold, has BUSH OFFERS AGENDA TO REVIVE ECONOMY (there is no separate story about Clinton). On September 12, the *Post* leads with BUSH APPROVES SALE OF F-15s TO SAUDIS (with Clinton on A10).

Perhaps most strikingly: on Monday, September 14, the *Post* runs a front-page story leading with how the Bush-Baker team maneuvered deftly to ensure that the Saudi plane-sale story make front pages — and, more important, dominate the TV news — on the previous Friday and Saturday! At that rate, Tuesday's front-page story could have been about how Baker wangled Monday's big story about Friday's big story. And so on each day until November 3.

Given the changing patterns of news coverage, it is little wonder that Dave Carney, national field director for the Bush-Quayle '92 campaign, declined, during a September 11 interview, to accept my invitation to bash the media. Instead, Carney said: "Generally, you know, people are pretty fair in covering the president.... I think most people in the media do a good job trying to cover the facts." ♦

## CAMPAGN ISSUES

# WHY

By James Boylan

Given the confidence that newspapers and politicians now place in polls, it is possible to imagine an election conducted by polls alone, much as was proposed for the flawed federal census — with scientific sampling instead of literal nose-counting. It would make for a cheaper campaign and the public might be better represented than it is now, for a carefully constructed sample could fill in segments chronically missing from the electorate.

But it won't happen — or at least I trust it won't happen. For an election, after all, remains the real thing and a poll, however scientific, a simulation. Flawed though elections may be — less than half the qualified population now votes for president — they remain the strongest link between most individuals and public life, the most direct and unequivocal means for rewarding or punishing those in power. This is an authority that few would be ready to delegate to a survey.

However, in journalism dealing with elections, the polls have all but won the day. Election-day exit questionnaires — filled out, tabulated, sliced and diced by sex, age, income, education, ethnicity, and religion — have become the key component of post-election analysis. In 1988 *The New York Times* used exit polls to present a "supertable" of 102 components, from white fundamentalists (81 percent for Bush) to black women (9 percent). The accompanying analysis drew extensively upon the polls. Similar tabulations and analyses appeared in *The Washington Post*, the

James Boylan, CJR's founding editor, is the author of *The New Deal Coalition and the Election of 1946*.

*Los Angeles Times*, and no doubt hundreds of other newspapers.

Despite its advantages in accessibility and comprehensibility, information from polls has its shortcomings. It necessarily represents a homogenized view of the electorate: voters who are not presented as living anywhere in particular, as discussing politics with anybody else, or as casting their votes at any particular site. This anomie is translated into a certain blandness and vagueness in election analysis. What is missing, I think, is the strong sense of place and time that is built into American politics. Indeed, the whole span of American electoral history centers on place — the changes produced over two hundred years by successive elections, like tides, in state, county, town, precinct.

Place has not been utterly lost; it still lies hidden in the *real* votes, the neglected "raw" returns. Where exit polls provide the responses of scattered voters, individual jellyfish floating in the vast sea of a mass electorate, these raw returns from specific places — county, legislative district, neighborhood — can reveal how voters acted as members of a polity, a community. The problem journalists face in using the raw vote is where to turn: Which among hundreds of thousands of voting sites are worth notice?

Although the first impulse may be to look for the typical, the opposite, the untypical, may be more productive. An area that is out of line, that is somehow moved and disturbed by an election, may reveal in its most intense and crystallized form the voter response to the issues of an election.

The method for searching out such electoral "hot spots" can be simple: it may start by using the previous comparable election as the predictor of the current one. Even elections that seem to be strikingly similar may contain underlying change. For example, the alignment of states in Bush's victory in 1988 unsurprisingly bore a strong resemblance to Reagan's in 1984. But there was shifting about: Bush most exceeded the predicted Republican vote in the South, especially in Georgia and Tennessee, and Dukakis most surpassed Mondale in Hawaii, Iowa, Colorado, and, of all places, Oklahoma.

By inspection of returns or by simple

statistical calculations it is possible to turn up such hot spots on a local level. To cite one example: in 1988, two legislative districts in south-central Los Angeles gave Dukakis more than 80 percent of their votes, yet the *number* of Democratic votes was off 24 percent from what could have been predicted from 1984. The practical result was a dent in Dukakis's chances in California. More important was the condition of the electorate: Where had the voters of 1984 gone? Not to the Republicans; the GOP vote stayed low. Had they moved away? Had they stayed home? Was this a preliminary tremor of disaffection in the area that experienced the great upheaval of 1992? In its post-election stories, the *Los Angeles Times* noted the absence of a big Democratic majority in Los Angeles, but went no further than to blame Dukakis volunteers.

It is important to probe to the right level. In Connecticut, where steady habits extend to voting, an analysis of county-wide returns for 1988 yielded little, but the more detailed breakdown for forty-six of the state's cities disclosed, among other things, the emptying out of the electorate in the old cities, especially Hartford, and the continuing increase in Republican voters in such exurban growth areas as Greenwich, Glastonbury, and Stamford. As it happened, *The Hartford Courant* was one newspaper that gave substantial attention to electoral geography in its 1988 coverage, especially on the Democratic failure in the industrial districts of the Naugatuck River valley.

All generalizations derived from election returns are, of course, merely hypotheses. They require the substantiation that can come only from reporting. Throughout 1992, newspapers, radio, and television have demonstrated refreshingly that they can talk to voters by dropping in to coffee shops and other public places. In general, this journalism has demonstrated that voters have had much more to say, and have said it better, than would be suspected from the polls' versions of their opinions. Extending the practice of dropping in to the days after the election is a unique opportunity. Not only could it add a fresh dimension to post-election analysis, but it could add to the record testimony that would otherwise soon be lost. ♦



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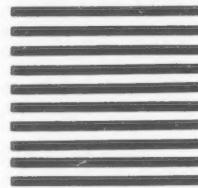
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# BOOKS



George Will

DAVID LEVINE: NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS 1978

## THE THUMB-SUCKERS

BY PIERS BRENDON

This provocative book questions the integrity as well as the ability of the nation's leading journalistic pundits. George Will coaches Reagan for his debate with President Carter; then he is happy to appear as an impartial observer on *Nightline* and to praise his pupil's "thoroughbred performance." Morton Kondracke and Robert Novak accept thousands of dollars for sharing their political wisdom with a gathering of Republican governors but do not feel that their position as objective commentators is impaired. Having been a speechwriter for Nixon, William Safire demonstrates his commitment to disinterested journalism by recommending in an early *Times* column that his former

Piers Brendon, author of *The Life and Death of the Press Barons*, lives in Cambridge, England.

boss should "reestablish the confidentiality of the presidency" by making "a public bonfire of the tapes on the White House lawn."

Contrast this, urges Eric Alterman, with the good old days of Walter Lippmann, who virtually created the profession of American punditry, a term which Alterman uses in elastic fashion and fails to define. Admittedly, Lippmann often succumbed in practice to the establishment embrace, notoriously in 1965 when he parroted the Pentagon cry that the "political bombings" of North Vietnam did not "kill anybody." But, an honest popular philosopher, he tried to educate himself and his countrymen in the increasingly complicated issues of the day. He had nothing in common with influence-peddlers like Arthur Brisbane (Hearst's and the world's highest-paid journalist, singularly absent from Alterman's account), who sold his editorial integrity to pro-German interests in World War I. Nor did Lippmann pull strings for powerful friends, as Arthur Krock, the *Times*'s Pulitzer Prize-winning pundit, did for Joseph P. Kennedy and his clan.

Today, however, the likes of George Will glory in their celebrity status and their access to the mighty. In the process, Alterman argues, they cease to be the agents of democracy and become accomplices in its subversion. They further imperil democracy by ensuring that the "national political discourse" is conducted at an abysmal level. Part of the reason for this is that most of them put the minimum of effort into their newspaper columns, which are written to sustain television stardom and to encourage the lucrative lecturing invitations that stem from it.

With incisive wit Alterman anatomizes the "deeply ideological" and "ceaselessly televised" pundits. *Agronsky and Company*, he reckons, was "about as much fun as a proctology exam." As Hugh Sidey got older, Morton Kondracke filled the need for "a reporter who is wholly incapable of embarrassment while prostrating himself before whatever powers might happen to be." Having built "a television empire of media hot air," John McLaughlin was unabashed by possible conflicts of interest (his wife at

the time was Reagan's secretary of labor) or by charges of sexual harassment. He made a tasteless crack on Anita Hill's character and credibility during the Clarence Thomas case "without so much as mentioning his own sordid history."

Alterman asserts that the pundits have remorselessly pushed the bound-

### SOUND AND FURY: THE WASHINGTON PUNDITOCRACY AND THE COLLAPSE OF AMERICAN POLITICS

BY ERIC ALTERMAN

HARPERCOLLINS. 352 PP. \$23

aries of national debate towards the right. Leadership of the conservative pack has now passed from suave elitist William Buckley, Jr., to crude populist Pat Buchanan. Under the control of Martin Peretz, *The New Republic* has fitfully abandoned much of its old liberalism. Dominated by Robert L. Bartley and allies, the editorial pages of *The Wall Street Journal* practically invented Reaganomics.

More serious still, the pundits went on fighting the cold war long after it was over. In November 1987, William Safire interpreted *glasnost* and *perestroika* as part of the Communist program to "dominate the world" and forecast that Gorbachev would "crack down as Mr. Stalin would have." Spotting a photograph of Daniel Ortega posing beside Erich Honecker in the *Times*, Edward Luttwak declared in one of his frequent op-ed pieces in *The Washington Post* that it "settled conclusively" the argument about "the nature of the Sandinista regime," only to discover that what he had seen was two quite separate pictures with only a tiny border between them. But not even he was as unlucky as George Will, who affirmed on November 9, 1989: "Liberalization is a ploy ... the Wall will remain." The Berlin Wall fell that very day.

Having been programmed for beligerence, Alterman contends, the pundits responded in Pavlovian fashion to an aggressive Iraq. They damned opposition to the war as appeasement and "worked in tandem" with Bush, orchestrating a "patriotic crescendo." Moreover, in celebrating the defeat of Saddam Hussein they were even less inclined to face the realities of



William F. Buckley, Jr.

I admire the merciless candor with which it is written.

The style, alas, is quite another matter. Alterman himself comments on the "lamentable state of journalistic prose," amusing himself at the expense of Norman Podhoretz, A.M. Rosenthal, and others. So I feel free to observe that his own writing often seems to have been riveted together by robots. It's bad enough that he has coined the noun "punditocracy," but he also uses it as an adjective — in grisly subacademic formulations like "the punditocracy mindset."

This term, indeed, which implies that pundits form a caste and a consensus, leaves him most open to criticism. As emerges time and again, individual pundits take their own line. Thus, for example, Alterman declares on page 239 that the "punditocracy" averts its gaze from the cities with their poor rates of life expectancy; yet on page 245 he quotes George Will deplored the fact that infant death rates in Washington, Detroit, and Baltimore are "humiliatingly close" to those of the third world. Alterman sets up the "punditocracy" not just as a straw entity but as a sinister cabal. He claims that it works "hand in glove" with the forces of charlatanism, terrorism, and jingoism. It is engaged in "an unspoken conspiracy of intellectual obsolescence and political intolerance." In short, at the heart of his book there is something that comes perilously close to being a conspiracy theory.

Such a wild idea about the present press may well reflect Alterman's failure to understand its past. His early historical section is simply inadequate. He states, for instance, that the elder James Gordon Bennett wrote a corrupt pro-Jacksonian dispatch for the *New York Herald* in 1828; in fact, Bennett did not found that paper until 1835 and he then used its prosperity to assert its independence. The apotheosis of journalistic independence was, of course, Joseph Pulitzer, who inexplicably does not receive a mention in *Sound and Fury*. Blind, reclusive, and uninfluenced, he created an editorial page in *The World* that aspired to be a "million-candle-power torch of liberty and intelligence." Despite its shortcomings, Alterman's powerful book may yet contribute to the revival of that noble ideal.

## Agents of democracy or accomplices in its subversion?

American decline — economic stagnation, social disintegration, environmental pollution, and so on.

Since Lippmann's time, incontinent pontification has been an increasingly dubious intellectual exercise, maintains Alterman, citing Fred Barnes's priceless claim that "I can speak to almost anything with a lot of authority." Now punditry has become "the ultimate triumph of power without responsibility; of opinion over knowledge." One way to change this situation, Alterman proposes, is to abandon the convention of reportorial objectivity — the *raison d'être* of the pundits. The convention that reporters should record but not explain, notoriously exploited by Joseph McCarthy, is based on an "artificial" separation of fact and opinion. Scrap it and experts can comment on their own subjects, while only the fittest pundits, such as Safire and Michael Kinsley, will survive.

Let me say, after this long summary, that I share Alterman's political bias (left-wing but, of course, "totally objective") and that I find much of his case convincing. I warmed to his trenchant book from the start because even the Acknowledgments made me laugh. And

# RAPED AGAIN?

BY SUSAN RIEGER

On its surface, *Virgin or Vamp* is an exercise in press criticism. In its heart, it's a book with a mission. While its "first and foremost" purpose is to look at the ways newspapers perpetuate the myths and stereotypes surrounding rapes and other violent crimes against women, its "purpose" is "ultimately to show reporters and editors how to cover sex crimes without further harming the victims."

The book's basic premise is encapsulated in its title. According to its author, Helen Benedict, the press tends to treat the victims of sex crimes either as virgins, good girls who didn't do anything, or vamps, bad girls who were "asking for it."

Benedict has her work cut out for her. At one point in her research she asked Hap Hairston, then city editor of *Newsday*, why his paper didn't consider societal attitudes toward women in its coverage of sex crimes. His answer oozed white-collar machismo: "That kind of journalism is thumbsucking journalism."

In her attempt to change this kind of thinking, Benedict takes an in-depth look at four famous sex crimes: the Greta and John Rideout case, the first case of marital rape in this country; the New Bedford gang rape, which became the source of the Jodie Foster movie *The Accused*; the Jennifer Levin-Robert Chambers case, known in the press as the "Preppy Murder" case; and the case of the Central Park jogger. Each one provides her with an opportunity for showing up a different aspect of the press's "myth-saturated" coverage of sex crimes.

In the Rideout case, Benedict explores the myth that rape within mar-

*Susan Rieger, a lawyer and free-lance writer, is dean of Ezra Stiles College at Yale University.*

riage isn't really rape. A popular myth which still enjoys widespread legal recognition in this country, it perpetuates the old notion of a man's right of access and a woman's duty to submit. As a California legislator was quoted as saying after the Rideout case, "If you can't rape your wife, who can you rape?"

The first of its kind, the 1978 Rideout case evoked skepticism and suspicion in many journalists. Pulitzer Prize-winner Mike Royko treated the Rideouts — and the crime — as a joke. "As most

#### **VIRGIN OR VAMP: HOW THE PRESS COVERS SEX CRIMES**

BY HELEN BENEDICT

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS. 299 PP. \$22.

people know," he wrote in his syndicated column, "Greta, 23, recently accused her husband, John, 21, of raping her. She also said he hardly ever brushed his teeth and did not bathe regularly . . . Women's groups howled that Greta was only the tip of the oppressed iceberg, that wives were being raped in droves by their husbands. Luckily for John, the jury believed him. Or at least it did not believe Greta. In either case, John was

found not guilty and avoided being sent to Oregon State Prison, where he surely would have suffered the humiliation of other prisoners pointing at him and teasing: 'He raped his wife; he raped his wife, the sissy.'" Did Royko mean to suggest that "real" men rape other men's wives?

The *Washington Post*'s William Raspberry, while more serious, was equally dismissive. Quoting with approval a letter in *The New York Times*, Raspberry wrote: "In a situation where a husband compels a wife to have sexual intercourse against her will, there cannot be the same traumatic experience. There may be resentment or injured feelings, but the overall effect cannot be compared to rape by a stranger." The underlying assumption here is that marital rape is a species of sex rather than a species of wife-battering. Benedict provides the necessary corrective. In a case of marital rape, she writes, "not only is the victim terrified, abused, and humiliated by the rape itself, but she has been betrayed by the very person she thought would protect her."

The second case, a 1983 gang rape in Big Dan's, a New Bedford bar, was a



AP/WIDEWORLD

**Greta Rideout: Must a wife submit?**

classic "vamp" case. The victim had every one of the eight characteristics that rape myths attach to bad girls. She knew her attackers; no weapon was used; she belonged to the same race, class, and ethnic group as the men who raped her; she was young; she was attractive; she had been "asking for it."

The crime was a horrific one. The young woman was repeatedly raped by a group of men while others stood

Photo by Martha Stewart

This book shatters the prevailing myth of an ignorant public at the mercy of a one-way flow of communication filtered through and orchestrated by the media. The authors' surveys and in-depth interviews show, rather, that people are entirely capable of interpreting the news and making sense of issues.

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Not one of the more than fifty reporters "covering" Kennedy in Dallas actually witnessed the assassination. Yet it was they who shaped our myths and memories of this momentous event. In analyzing how they functioned in this crisis, Zelizer raises serious questions about how the media define our reality.

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**COMMON KNOWLEDGE**  
*News and the Construction of Political Meaning*  
**W. Russell Neuman, Marion R. Just, and Ann N. Crigler**

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*The Kennedy Assassination, the Media, and the Shaping of Collective Memory*  
**Barbie Zelizer**

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around watching and cheering.

Initially, press coverage was sympathetic to the victim; a gang rape, even when the accuser knows her attackers, is a hard thing to stomach. Here, the additional specter of the cheering bystanders put the press firmly on the victim's side. Memories of Kitty Genovese hovered.

By the time the case came to trial, the tide had turned, at least in the local paper. The first accounts in the *Standard-Times* had identified the accused rapists as Portuguese, and early stories made persistent references to their ethnic background. These stories unleashed vicious anti-Portuguese sentiment in the larger New Bedford area, and the Portuguese community, reacting to the slurs, rallied round the accused rapists, organizing defense funds and accusing the press of creating "a psychological state of siege toward a particular ethnic group." The fact that the victim was also Portuguese seemed lost on everyone.

At the trial, the defendants and their lawyers went on the attack. The victim wanted sex; she didn't resist; she was a liar; she was drunk; she was wild and

promiscuous; right before the alleged rape, she had been sitting naked on the pool table, smoking marijuana; she was a welfare cheat. The papers reported all of these accusations, as well as your-typical-man-in-the-street comment: "I'm for the guys more than the girl," nineteen year-old Ernie Santos of Fall River, a floor-sander, told *The Providence Journal*. "I mean, what was she doing there in the first place? I think she was looking."

The most controversial story was a jailhouse interview with one of the defendants published in the *Boston Herald*. Under the headline **BIG DAN SUSPECT: SHE LED US ON**, the article began: "In a dramatic, exclusive interview, a Big Dan's defendant said the young woman pleaded for sex on a pool table after 'getting all friendly' and drinking heavily." The reporter, John Impemba, had originally done the interview for the *Standard-Times*, but James Ragsdale, the editor, refused to publish it, calling it "fatally flawed" and a "marshmallow interview." Undeterred, Impemba took it to the *Herald*.

When the trial ended in convictions, the attacks against the victim redoubled.

Three days after the verdict, she left town, hounded out by a wave of violent threats against herself and her family. The local papers barely noticed.

Anti-victim crusades have their logic. As Benedict points out, blaming the victim makes it easier for the rest of us to sleep at night. We feel safer when we can believe that bad things only happen to bad people. We don't want to be reminded that most rapes, like most murders or most robberies, are crimes of opportunity.

Although the Rideout and New Bedford cases generated slews of articles, the Preppy Murder case is the sort journalists love best: a crime among their own kind. On August 26, 1986, eighteen-year-old Jennifer Levin was found strangled in Central Park. Shortly afterward, the police arrested Robert Chambers, the last person to be seen with her. It was a story sent from tabloid heaven. As Bill Hoffman, a reporter for the *New York Post*, remembered fondly: "We were listening to the police radio. We heard the words Central Park, young white teenager, gorgeous and strangled, and it was like TNT was planted under our rear ends....

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# Reporters couldn't believe that a big, handsome, white boy with money in his pocket would murder a girl on purpose and without provocation

It was sex, tits and ass, and a strangling — we knew it would sell."

One of the more interesting aspects of the Levin-Chambers case had to do with the press's credulity. The early stories bought and sold Robert Chambers's version of the crime: he said he had accidentally strangled Levin after she squeezed his testicles during sex. The *Post's* headline read: JENNY KILLED IN WILD SEX.

Reporters were taken in by Chambers largely because they couldn't believe that a big, handsome, white boy with money in his pocket would, in Benedict's words, murder a girl "on purpose" and "without provocation." The *Post's* Hoffman acknowledged the media's blind spot: "It took a long time for the press to realize what a total scumbag Chambers was." It swallowed the line dangled before them by Chambers's wily lawyer, Jack Litman: "The sad part of this story," he said in an interview, "is that this could happen to anybody's kids."

Litman knew reporters. Out of "the time-honored journalistic impulse to find a moral lesson in every case," the New York papers churned out stories about teenagers who stayed out drinking all night. Under the headline KILLING IN PARK RAISES DIFFICULT QUESTIONS FOR AFFLUENT PARENTS, *New York Times* reporter Samuel Freedman asked readers: "Have some parents in demanding, high-paying professions substituted money for affection and freedom for supervision?" The message was clear: Jennifer Levin was murdered, not because she had the bad luck to date a "scumbag," but because her rich, divorced parents didn't put her on a curfew.

The last case in Benedict's book, that

of the Central Park Jogger, is interesting because the crime was treated exclusively as a race crime, not a sex crime. To a man, the press saw it as a story about a "wilding" spree, not a gang rape.

By almost every standard, the attack on the jogger was a classic gang rape. As Benedict observes, "gang rape is overwhelmingly committed by teenage boys on a lone female, and is likely to involve more sexual humiliation, beating, and torture than single-assailant rapes." The major anomaly was the race of the perpetrators. "Most gang rapists are white," Benedict explains.

In article after article, the newspapers looked everywhere else for explanations for the crime: at various times, drugs, class, the ghetto's "culture of violence," rap music, the lack of fathers in the boys' lives, the lack of a death penalty, television, movies, schools, boredom, peer pressure, the full moon, Mayor Koch — in short everything but misogyny — were all cited as possible causes. In an opinion piece in *Commentary* magazine, Richard Brookhiser "wrote an entire essay about the media's attempt to find explanations for the crime, and never mentioned it as a crime against women once."

When Benedict pursued the issue with reporters and editors, they tended to shrug off her inquiry. Michael T. Kaufman, then metropolitan reporter, now deputy foreign editor of *The New York Times*, was blandly dismissive: "I can't imagine the range of reaction to the sexual aspect of the crime would be very strong." Another editor at the *Times*, Paul Fishleder, agreed: "Racism is the big story in New York. Men-women relations, or whatever you want to call them, are not."

Patrick Clark, then a court reporter at the *Daily News*, provided a more thoughtful response: "Why was the story covered in terms of race as opposed to gender? I guess because the city desk is made up of male whites."

When *Virgin or Vamp* went to press, the Palm Beach rape story was just breaking. It vividly confirmed Benedict's thesis. While the alleged rapist, William Kennedy Smith, was pursued by photographers, the alleged victim, Patricia Bowman, was hounded by reporters, most famously in *The New York Times*. In *The Girls in the Balcony*, her recent

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### MISCELLANEOUS

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book on women at the *Times*, veteran journalist Nan Robertson recounts with relish the storm that broke at the Good Gray Lady the day the *Times* ran an in-depth profile of Bowman.

The story was comprehensive. It not only told of the young woman's speeding tickets, poor grades, "wild streak," and out-of-wedlock child; it chronicled her mother's rise in the social world from executive secretary to Executive Wife. Its headline, LEAP UP SOCIAL LADDER FOR WOMAN IN RAPE INQUIRY, seemed to suggest, albeit inadvertently, that a rape, in the right circumstances, by the right person, could boost a young woman's social standing.

Robertson wrote: "The morning the profile appeared, the *Times* building exploded." In a palace revolution, the women at the *Times* accused the editors of betraying the paper's standards, characterizing the story as an "outrageous smear — sexist, class-ridden, a nasty piece of work riddled with negative quotes from anonymous sources."

At first angry and defensive, the editors soon grasped the heat and depth of the rage they had unleashed, not only among their staff but also among readers. Worried about the paper's reputation, they issued a disclaimer. In an Editor's Note, they said that readers of the *Times* had inferred that the "detailed biographical material" about Ms. Bowman and her family "suggested that the *Times* was challenging her account." They explained: "No such challenge was intended, and the *Times* regrets that some parts of the article reinforced such inferences." Was this an apology? As *Times* columnist Anna Quindlen wryly observed: "First they blamed the victim. And then they blamed the reader."

When Robertson asked one of the editors responsible for the story if he had learned anything from the episode, he replied, "I never thought that rape was something people took lightly, but the power of the subject to provoke volcanic rage is a revelation to me.... I knew how to handle sensitive material about Jews and Arabs, but not about this. Now I will be hypersensitive and cautious. I've heard a lot of screaming from the depth of people's souls, and I'll remember. That awareness alone could serve me as an editor."

Speaking of the Levin-Chambers

case to Benedict, the *Post*'s Hoffman was less repentant. "My answer is that tabloids shouldn't stop writing about women that way, they should just write more about men the same way. Everything should be wild and flashy."

Waxing rhapsodic, Hoffman went on: "As a tabloid newspaperman, you thirst for a story like that. You know people love to read it, that it will get big play. Even if you're writing garbage, as long as people read it is the main thing." He explained: "We're in the business of selling newspapers, and the public thirsted after that story."

Benedict doesn't buy it. Citing a 1985 poll by the American Society of Newspaper Editors indicating that most adults "think the press takes advantage of ordinary people who become victims of circumstance," Benedict accuses the press of "blaming its exploitative impulses on a public that does not approve of them." Who, then, was buying all those copies of the *Post*?

*Virgin or Vamp* is an important book, but it is also an irritating one. At almost every turn, its intelligent analyses and perceptive observations are undercut by its censorious tone.

Benedict is also the author of *Recovery: How to Survive Sexual Assault*. Her experience researching and writing that book has unfortunately left its mark on this one. Too often, Benedict sounds less like a press critic than a victims' rights advocate. In her discussion of the New Bedford gang rape, for instance, Benedict consistently uses a pseudonym for the victim even though she's been dead for years and her real name is "widely available now in records and news reports." Benedict explains: "I do not wish to perpetuate the pain of the rape and its memory on her family." Similar pieties abound.

Benedict's sermonizing not only blunts legitimate debates over problematic issues like naming the victims of sex crimes; it threatens to alienate her audience, including those who might be accused of practicing "thumbsucking" journalism. That would be too bad.

*Virgin or Vamp* makes an airtight case. It's not only the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Navy brass who "just don't get it." As Benedict makes very clear, most of the media haven't a clue. ♦

## SHORT TAKES

### PRESERVING THE MYTH

Consider these color photographs, introduced as evidence in a South African trial virtually ignored by the outside world. They show the scarred and mutilated torsos of two teenage torture victims, brothers named Peter and Phillip. (Peter was only sixteen, so the brothers' last name was withheld by the court in accordance with South African law.) Peter and Phillip claim they were roused from their beds in the dead of night by masked gunmen and taken to a prefabricated shack in someone's Soweto backyard, where they were accused of treachery to the struggle and ordered to confess. When they balked, Peter was hanged by the neck from the rafters until the rafters broke. Then the torturers put a plastic bag over his head and half-drowned him in a bucket of water. After that, some women tied Phillip's hands behind his back and forced him to sit in a chair. A man produced a penknife and started carving freedom slogans onto the boy's body: a big "M" for Mandela on his chest, "Viva ANC" on his thigh. And finally, someone fetched a car battery and the wounds were etched into Phillip's flesh with sulfuric acid.

It was just another atrocity in a season

### Winnie Mandela leads a 1988 funeral procession



of atrocities in most respects save one: it allegedly took place at the home of Mrs. Winnie Mandela, first lady of the Charterist movement and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, subject of ten thousand hagiographic newspaper and magazine profiles, several sycophantic books, at least three prospective Hollywood movies, and an on-again, off-again miniseries to be produced by Harry Belafonte....

Schoolchildren in Mrs. Mandela's neighborhood grew so tired of being bullied by her thugs that they eventually burned her house down in broad daylight while her neighbors looked on indifferently, none bothering to throw so much as a cup of water onto the flames. Every journalist in Johannesburg knew the gory details, but no newspaper that I know of printed them — not at the time, at any rate. Why? I'll tell you why. Because white reporters and editors didn't want to be branded racists, and black reporters were "paralyzed by fear," to use George Wauchope's phrase. If you lived in Soweto, there were some things you dared not say for fear of being labelled a sellout. Sellouts did not live long. One of the township's most prominent black journalists chuckled bleakly when I asked why the full story of the arson attack on Winnie Mandela's home hadn't yet been written. "You write it," he said. "You're white, you might get away with it."

#### FROM **MY TRAITOR'S HEART**

BY RIAN MALAN, VINTAGE  
INTERNATIONAL. 425 PP. \$10.95

## THE FORBIDDEN CHAMBER

The day before the primary, he was flying upstate. Overnight, the U.S. Navy had shot up an Iranian oil platform — retaliation for mines sown in the Persian Gulf. The press wanted to know: What did Dukakis think of the action in the Gulf? Michael was careful. He said he'd have to study the reports. He was seeking full information.... Then he walked down the aisle of his big new plane, to the bathroom in the rear — one thing about these events: if you're the star, you never get a minute to pee. So he was trying to edge into the can, and the Reuters guy asked him again: "How 'bout the Gulf?" Dukakis just wanted to get by — for God's sake, he had to pee! "Well, it, ah, seemed like a measured response." So, of course, next stop, the Reuters guy filed ... and everybody else went bullshit! Their desks wanted to know: "Why no Duke-react? Reuters has Duke-react!".... So on the plane, they were screaming: WHADDABOUT IRAN? And in front, Michael's wise guys were bawling him out: "Don't do that! Don't go back there."

"I was going to the bathroom!"

They told him not to go to the bathroom.

#### FROM **WHAT IT TAKES: THE WAY TO THE WHITE HOUSE**

BY RICHARD BEN CRAMER. RANDOM HOUSE. 1,047 PP. \$28.

## WHAT HARRY KNEW

It had been known for some while that *Newsweek* magazine was taking a poll of fifty highly regarded political writers, to ask which candidate they thought would win the election. And since several of the fifty had been on the train with Truman during the course of the campaign — Marquis Childs, Robert Albright of *The Washington Post*, Bert Andrews of the *New York Herald Tribune* — there had been a good deal of speculation about the poll. It appeared in *Newsweek* in the issue dated October 11, and on the morning of Tuesday, October 12, three weeks before election day, at one of the first stops in Indiana, Clark Clifford slipped off the train to try to find a copy before anyone else. The woman at the station newsstand pointed to a bundle wrapped in brown paper, telling him to help himself. "And there it was!" remembered Clifford years afterward.

Of the writers polled, not one thought Truman would win. The vote was unanimous, 50 for Dewey, 0 for Truman. "The landslide for Dewey will sweep the country," the magazine announced. Further, the Republicans would keep control in the Senate and increase their majority in the House. The election was as good as over.

Returning to the train, Clifford hid the magazine under his coat. With the train about to leave, the only door still open was on the rear platform.

So I walked in, President Truman was sit-



ting there, and so I cheerfully said, "Good morning, Mr. President." He said, "Good Morning, Clark." And I said, "Another busy day ahead." "Yes," he said.... So I walked off ... and I got almost by him when he said, "What does it say?" And I said, "What's that, Mr. President?" He said, "What does it say?" And I said, "Now what does what ...?" He said, "I saw you get off and go into the station. I think you probably went in there to see if they had a copy of *Newsweek* magazine." And he said, "I think it is possible that you may have it under your jacket there, the way you're holding your arm." Well, I said, "Yes, sir."

So I handed it to him.... And he turned the page and looked at it ... [and] he said, "I know every one of these 50 fellows. There isn't one of them has enough sense to pound sand in a rat hole."

#### FROM **TRUMAN**

BY DAVID McCULLOUGH.  
SIMON & SCHUSTER. 1,117 PP. \$30.



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The average administrative cost to run Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans in New York State is just EIGHT CENTS out of every premium dollar. That covers everything from sales to service.

That means 92 CENTS from every premium dollar is returned in subscriber health care benefits.

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It only takes common sense to answer.



**Blue Cross  
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Plans of New York State

# The Lower case

Ex-aide sees Perot re-entering race

*The Toledo Blade* 9/25/92



**U.S. advice: Keep drinking water from sewage**

*Journal and Courier* (Lafayette, Ind.) 9/17/92

'Women in Politics' workshop postponed; make-up not set

*The Charlotte Observer* 11/13/91

Survey: Only 9 percent of doctors report having sex with patients

*The Herald-Sun* (Durham, N.C.) 8/7/92

**Admirals axed for roll in Tailhook**

*Norwich (Conn.) Bulletin* 9/25/92

**Gore rapes Bush over environment**

*The Jonesboro (Ark.) Sun* 9/20/92

**Vicious animal calls up**

*The Chapel Hill (N.C.) Herald* 9/6/92

**Barbara Bush talks about her life, abortion and homosexuality.**

*The Muncie (Ind.) Evening Press* 8/14/92

**Jeanette Lindholm Receives Doctorette**

*The Independent* (Ortonville, Minn.) 5/27/92

**Hurricane expert calls for shelters**

*The Miami Herald* 6/5/92



**Technology 'crushing state's 'functional illiterates'**

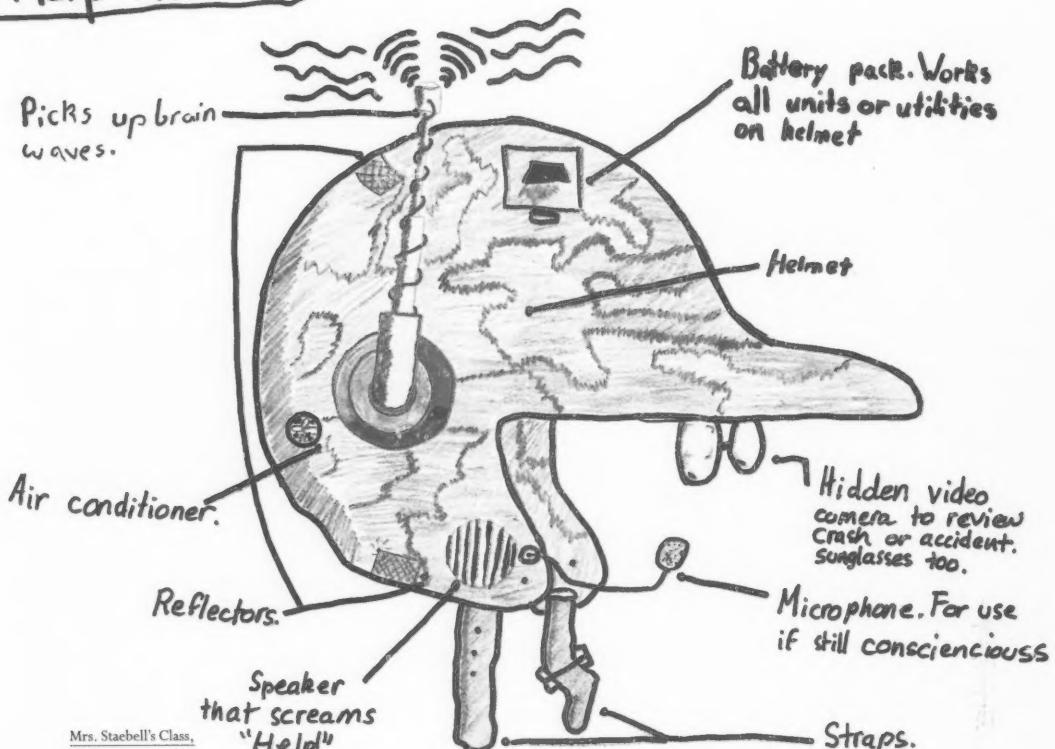
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